

JOURNAL OF EARLY  
SOUTHERN DECORATIVE ARTS

WINTER 1995 VOLUME XXI, NUMBER 2



THE MUSEUM OF EARLY SOUTHERN DECORATIVE ARTS

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In November 1994, in conjunction with the Lyceum in Alexandria, Virginia, MESDA held its first fall ceramics seminar, "Up from the Earth: Virginia Pottery," to celebrate the publication of H. E. Comstock, *Pottery of the Shenandoah Valley Region* (MESDA, 1994). This *Journal* is devoted to the papers presented at that seminar, which offer perspectives on the evolution of Virginia's rich pottery tradition. In addition, a research note revealing the identity of the earliest potter known in English North America, which was not presented at the seminar, is also included as appropriate to this volume.—ED.

The *Journal of Early Southern Decorative Arts* is published twice a year by the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts (MESDA). It presents research on decorative arts made in the South prior to 1820, with an emphasis on object studies in a material culture context.

Potential contributors are encouraged to contact the Managing Editor for guidelines concerning subject matter and manuscript preparation.

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# Contents

The Colonial Potters of Tidewater Virginia BEVERLY A. STRAUBE	1
An Archaeological Perspective on Alexandria's Pottery Tradition BARBARA H. MAGID	41
The Lowndes Stoneware Pottery of Petersburg, Virginia CHARLES E. UMSTOTT	83
Exploring Western Virginia Potteries KURT C. RUSS	98
Research Note	
The Martin's Hundred Potter: English North America's Earliest Known Master of His Trade MARTHA H. MCCARTNEY	139



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# The Colonial Potters of Tidewater Virginia

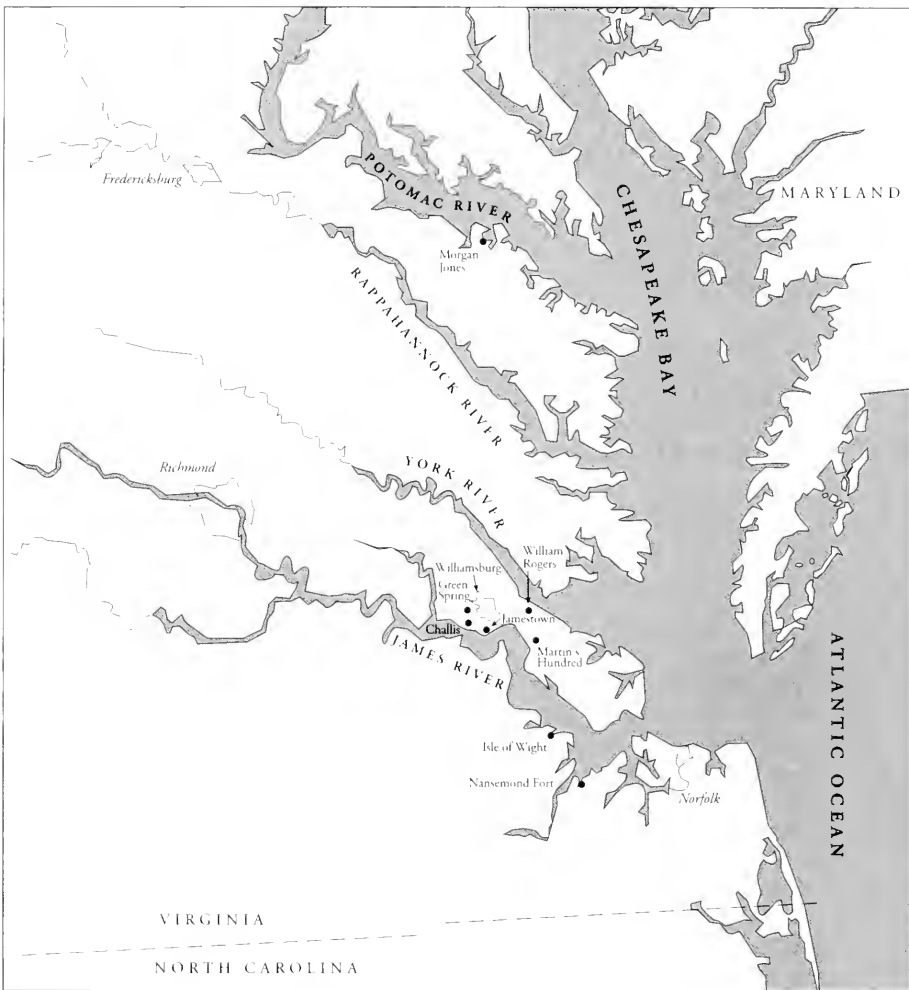
BEVERLY A. STRAUBE

There is likewise found great Variety of Earths for Physick, Cleansing, Scouring, and making all Sorts of Potters-Ware; such as Antimony, Talk, yellow red Oker, Fullers-earth, Pipe-Clay, and other fat and fine Clays, Marle, &c. In a Word, there are all kinds of Earth fit for Use.

—ROBERT BEVERLY, *The History and Present State of Virginia, 1705*.<sup>1</sup>

ROBERT BEVERLEY'S comprehensive portrayal of Virginia from 1705 includes this description of Virginia soils that has been verified in recent years through the archaeological record. Virginia does indeed have earth suitable for making pottery, as evidenced by the plethora of locally made wares appearing on seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century archaeological sites. In most cases, these wares have been identified by the location where they were archaeologically recovered. In a few instances, documentary evidence can be linked with archaeological findings to give the potter a name and, at times, even his dates of production.

To date, the wares of eight colonial Virginia potters have been identified and associated with eight probable sites of production (fig.



1. Map showing locations of Virginia's identified potters of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.



1). In reality, there may be only six potters, for there are indications that two of the potters may each have been working in more than one location. The perceived differences in the potters' production that resulted in their dual identities are perhaps a result of different clay sources. Only three potters have been verified through the location of their kilns. The rest have been identified through the excavation of waster sherds, kiln furniture, or concentrations of large quantities of locally produced ceramics.

The process of understanding and defining the pottery produced in colonial Tidewater Virginia has evolved over the past twenty years as more sites are excavated, more assemblages are thoroughly analyzed and quantified, and more reports are published. This study, based primarily on the extensive archaeological collections of the Virginia Division of Historic Resources, Richmond, and of Colonial National Historical Park, Jamestown, is an attempt to record the present knowledge of Virginia's colonial potters in a comparative context. Both collections have been curated by the author over the past twenty years and contain vast amounts of local pottery. It is hoped that this work may alert those working with colonial Virginia archaeological collections to discernible differences among the various local wares.

Distinguishing one locally made lead-glazed earthenware from another can be a daunting task for the untrained eye; often, for expediency, these wares are lumped by catalogers under such undiagnostic labels as "Yorktown-type" or "redwares." Beyond glazes and fabrics, there are differences in the way a potter forms his rims, handles, and bases that become a signature of that craftsman's work. Recognizing these differences can not only provide the researcher with important dating information for archaeological sites, but can also place the pottery and its production back in the social context. More important, correct attribution of the local wares by catalogers of archaeological collections will result in data that could be compared from site to site, providing a regional and temporal view of the early Virginia pottery industry. This introduction to Virginia's colo-

nial potters presents the characteristics of the different local products for researchers who wish to gain a clearer understanding of the variances.<sup>2</sup>

For the most part, Virginia potters in the seventeenth century produced lead-glazed earthenwares from the hematite-rich Tidewater clays. Hematite inclusions, diagnostic of the local wares, are visible on earthenwares as red grains peppering the fabric. The clear lead glazes on these earthenwares appear in varying shades of light to dark brown, orange, or light to olive green, depending on kiln atmospheres and firing temperatures. Occasionally slipwares were coated with a liquid clay or slip under the lead glaze to change the ground color of the vessel and allow for contrasting decorative techniques such as slip trailing, marbling, or sgraffito.

Following the English ceramic tradition in which they learned their craft, the Virginia potters used traditional methods of forming, firing, and glazing that had been practiced since the medieval period. The pots were produced by a combination of hand-formed and wheel-thrown techniques. While each vessel was primarily formed on a rotating kick wheel, elements such as spouts, handles, and decorative accents were added by hand.<sup>3</sup> The wheel-thrown wares are utilitarian: milk pans, storage jars, bowls, pipkins, chamber pots, pitchers, porringers, chafing dishes, candlesticks, bottles, and mugs. English pottery forms of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries were heavily influenced by the increased importation of ceramic wares and the emigration of potters from the Continent, especially the Low Countries.<sup>4</sup> This led to a rather uniform ceramic material record which, to the convenience of archaeologists working on seventeenth-century Virginia sites, is illustrated in great detail in Dutch genre paintings.

There is no evidence for any attempt at pottery production during the first decade of English settlement at Jamestown. The Jamestown colony was established in April 1607 as an economic venture of the Virginia Company, a London-based group of entrepreneurs chartered by James I. During the first years of settlement, the

colonists were engaged in enterprises that would potentially fatten the purses of the investors. These included glassmaking, the search for precious metals, and the production of pitch, tar, and soap ashes. Pottery production, a relatively minor industry in England at this time, was not a priority.

Pottery making in seventeenth-century England was basically a rural endeavor correlated with low status. It was practiced part-time by members of a household as permitted by the agricultural schedule.<sup>5</sup> The products were ultimately more valuable to consumers as containers and conveyors of high-status objects than as coarse utilitarian wares.<sup>6</sup>

The local ceramic record begins with the Martin's Hundred potter, whose work appears in contexts near Jamestown as early as the 1620s, and ends with William Rogers, who operated a kiln in Yorktown from 1720–1745. From the mid-eighteenth century to the beginning of the nineteenth century there is no evidence of coarse earthenware being produced in Tidewater Virginia.

#### THE MARTIN'S HUNDRED POTTER

Traces of what may be the earliest potting endeavor were first identified at Martin's Hundred, now known as Carter's Grove, about ten miles below Jamestown on the James River (fig. 1).<sup>7</sup> Recent archival research has revealed the possible identity of this potter as Thomas Ward.<sup>8</sup> Ward, who was 47 years old in 1624, apparently arrived in Virginia in 1621.<sup>9</sup> Based on a slipware dish attributed to the Martin's Hundred potter, which is dated 1631,<sup>10</sup> Ward appears to have worked into the 1630s. His wares have been found in contexts dating to the second quarter of the seventeenth century on Jamestown Island and in settlements at Kingsmill, which lies along the James River between Martin's Hundred and Jamestown. Although no kiln was located, the large quantities of wasters, and a roofing tile bearing the outline of a pot and covered with glaze drippings, point to the existence of pottery production.<sup>11</sup>

The lead-glazed earthenwares reflect the talents of a very accomplished potter. Not only were the wares adeptly made, but they included some highly sophisticated forms, belying the common belief that the colonists dropped their aesthetic standards for the sake of utility. Among these vessels is a piece of distillation equipment called an alembic. From the late medieval period, distillation was associated with the production of alcohol as well as with assaying in metallurgy.<sup>12</sup> With the late sixteenth-century appearance of herbals describing the medicinal use of plants, distilling also became a popular practice among the gentry and merchant classes for the concoction of home remedies.<sup>13</sup> The potter has embellished his earthenware laboratory equipment with decorative elements that include cordoning, a circle of thumb-impressions joining the spout to the body, and a turned handle on the top of the vessel bearing a dab of green glaze.

The fabric of the Martin's Hundred potter's vessels is usually orange-red in color and bricky in texture, and the glazes used range from orange to dark chocolate brown. The potter must have been very frustrated at his craft for, while it is evident that he was highly skilled, he evidently had trouble with the Virginia clay and the glazes that he had available. This is particularly apparent with his trailed and sgraffitoid slipware, where the slip did not adhere uniformly to the clay fabric. The potter must have quickly abandoned attempts to produce decorated wares, because not many have been recovered archaeologically. There is some evidence that he was processing lead shot for his glaze, and this may explain some of the problems.<sup>14</sup> Shot was found trapped in the glaze pooled up in the bottom of a Martin's Hundred mug.<sup>15</sup>

#### *Martin's Hundred Pottery Forms*

The Martin's Hundred artifact inventory and ceramic analysis, with illustrations of all the forms, is currently being prepared for publication by the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.<sup>16</sup> The vessel forms include alembics, three-legged cooking pots, pipkins, lidded storage jars, handled cooking pots, fuming pots, pans, dishes, flat-

based cooking pots, and chamber pots. The wares attributed to the Martin's Hundred potter appear, in most cases, to be the same as those described as Jamestown pottery and will be discussed in greater detail under those forms.

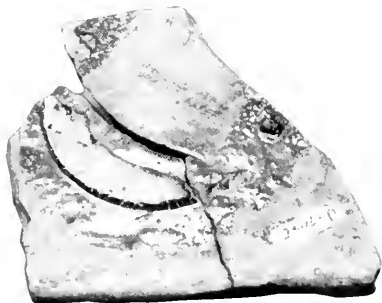
#### THE JAMESTOWN POTTER

There is also evidence of a skilled potter, or potters, working at Jamestown from c. 1630–1645 (fig. 1). National Park Service archaeologists in the 1930s tentatively identified traces of three kilns with associated roofing tiles bearing pot scars like those found at Martin's Hundred.<sup>17</sup> No large waster piles were found in association with the kilns, thereby shedding some doubt on their function; as Ivor Noël Hume has put it, "A wood-firing kiln rarely burns evenly, and consequently there are always waste products."<sup>18</sup> There are a number of over-fired and under-fired vessels, but it is difficult to judge if the potters would consider them wasters or seconds. There is much evidence in the archaeological and documentary record of seconds, consisting of broken and misshapen vessels, being used. Further study of the Jamestown collection is needed to determine if these deposits of "defective vessels" are concentrated, which would be indicative of a waster pile, or randomly spread out around the settlement, which would suggest they were being used.

Like the Martin's Hundred potter, the Jamestown potter evidently had trouble with his clays and glazes. The fabric of his vessels ranges in color and texture from buff and chalky to reddish-orange and brickly. The glazes appear in varying shades of light yellow, dark brown, yellowish brown, and olive green, with many glazing defects. In some instances the glaze is so thin that it looks like a slip, a wash of liquid clay that is applied to vessels before glazing to change the ground color. Characteristic of the Jamestown potter's wares are small pinpricks in the surface of vessels surrounded by dots of glaze (fig. 2). It appears that a natural inclusion in the clay, such as hematite, calcium, or salt, is burned out in areas covered with glaze.



2. Jamestown cup base, showing the characteristic pinpricks in the fabric surrounded by dots of glaze. *Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities, Jamestown Rediscovery, JRT0H-10f-10K-10N-10X.*



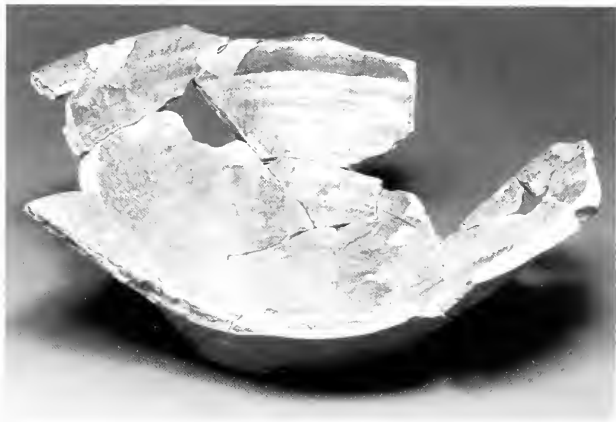
3. Roofing tile, excavated at Jamestown, bearing a pot scar and glaze drippings. *National Park Service, Colonial National Historical Park, 1-7006.*

The Jamestown potter's forms are very similar to some of those identified as being of Martin's Hundred manufacture, indicating that perhaps the same potter was at work in both places. It is tempting to assign a Jamestown pitcher bearing traces of incised initials, the first of which may be a "T", to the handiwork of Thomas Ward.<sup>19</sup> It is interesting that the only evidence of a pottery kiln is the same at both sites: roofing tiles with pot impressions and glaze drippings (fig. 3). This suggests an itinerant potter traveling to where he can sell his wares and producing them in a simple ground-laid kiln. Open firings above ground or in a shallow pit, for which pots are stacked around and under the fuel, are commonly practiced by traditional potters today and leave little, if any, physical evidence to be recovered archaeologically.<sup>20</sup> This method is very efficient for firing coarsewares, with even glaze firings possible, and it provides the advantage of flexibility. The potter can fire up as few or as many pots as he likes and does not need to wait until he has produced a whole kiln-load of wares before firing them. This would have made sense

in colonial Virginia where the potter probably only engaged in his craft part-time, as demand required it—the rest of his time could be spent in some aspect of tobacco production, the big money-maker and all-encompassing enterprise.

*Jamestown Pottery Forms*

At least sixteen forms have been recognized as products of the Jamestown potter.<sup>21</sup> These include vessels for the storage, preparation, and serving of food and drink, as well as specialized utilitarian forms modeled after non-ceramic objects such as candlesticks, fuming pots, and distilling apparatus. The most common form appears to be the pan or pancheon (fig. 4). This vessel type was introduced in the late sixteenth century, at which time it consisted of a wide, high-sided bowl-shaped object with an everted rim, usually containing a pouring spout. The pan became shallower and wider through



4. Jamestown pan or pancheon, DOA 14" (est.). *National Park Service, Colonial National Historical Park, J-34271A.*



5. Some of the Jamestown potter's forms. Left to right: small storage jar (J-7089), HOA 8"; pitcher (J-7600), HOA 12"; large storage jar (J-7008), HOA 10".

time, until it was almost dish-shaped, and the rim became narrower. Used primarily in a dairying context for separating cream, the pan or pancheon form proved to be very useful for many household purposes and is the most common form of the seventeenth-century coarsewares.<sup>22</sup>

The storage jar is the next most popular pottery form produced by the Jamestown potter (fig. 5). It is cylindrical in form, with an internal ledge at the rim to hold a lid. The Jamestown jar was made in two sizes, the smaller about 8 inches tall and the larger from 10 to 12 inches tall. The large jars are always embellished with a thumb-impressed band just under the rim. The band would have been applied when the jar was in the leather-hard state so that the wall of the jar would stand firm as the band was impressed; while decorative, the band served primarily to strengthen the rims of these large jars.



The shoulders of both sizes of jars are cordoned, reminiscent of the cordage that binds stave-built wooden vessels together. Again, this decorative element served a functional purpose by providing a textured area for gripping the vessel.

The Jamestown potter also made large dishes, about 10 inches in diameter, with a flat base and a wide marly. These forms were glazed on the interior only, and there are indications that some may have been slip-decorated. Dishes were used not only as serving vessels but also to bake or cook a course of food, sometimes with an inverted second dish used as a lid.<sup>23</sup> Dishes would not be placed over an open fire as a cooking pot would, but had an individual heat source called a chafing dish.

Ceramic chafing dishes appear frequently in Jamestown Island contexts but have not been documented as having been found on other Tidewater Virginia sites (fig. 6). This pottery form appeared in the late medieval period as copies of the metal chafing dishes owned by the wealthy<sup>24</sup> and continued to be produced into the first half of the eighteenth century.<sup>25</sup> Hot embers placed in the bowl would heat



6. The Jamestown potter's chafing dish from, HOA 5 $\frac{5}{8}$ ", Dia. 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". *National Park Service, Colonial National Historical Park, J-23348.*

or warm a plate of food balanced on three knobs projecting from the top. The cut-out in the pedestal base provided ventilation to keep the coals glowing. Randle Holme, a seventeenth-century recorder of material culture, describes that the purpose of the chafing dish “is to hold hot coales of fire in, and to set dish-meates theron, to keepe them warme till the tyme of serving them up to the table, or to heat a cold dish of meate, on the table.”<sup>26</sup> The seeming popularity of the chafing dish in early seventeenth-century Jamestown suggests that the colonists did not prepare their food solely in an English folk tradition, which relied heavily on pottages or stews served directly from a cauldron over the fire.<sup>27</sup> Rather, the chafing dish provided a “gentle method of heating”<sup>28</sup> a single serving of food. This was especially necessary when cooking food in pewter dishes, which have a low melting point and could not withstand the intense heat of an open fire.

Constructed much the same as a chafing dish is the fuming pot, used to burn sweet-smelling herbs to counteract odors. It has the same pedestal base as the chafing dish, but its body has straighter, narrower sides and lacks the projecting knobs. In addition, the body sides of fuming pots have cut-out openings of various shapes for dispensing the fumes. The Jamestown potter used rectangular slits for this purpose. The fuming pot is not a commonly recorded shape on Virginia sites; only two examples are known at Jamestown, and a third was excavated at Martin’s Hundred.<sup>29</sup>

The Jamestown potter produced drinking vessels in the form of barrel-shaped mugs (fig. 7) very similar to the Haslam Type I mugs produced by the Borderware potters in England.<sup>30</sup> Common features include the neck cordon below the rim, the folded and rounded base, and the ovoid handle, which is applied over the neck cordon at the top and pressed to the body at the bottom by wiping at each side.

A large loop-handled pot, seemingly well suited for the transportation of water, is another shape made by the Jamestown potter. This vessel has two large, round-sectioned loop handles, a flat bot-

tom, and a smoothly finished, restricted neck. It is glazed on the interior to make the vessel impermeable to liquid.

The Jamestown potter's chamber pot (fig. 7) looks very much like the form produced by the Martin's Hundred potter, which in turn is very "Dutch" in appearance. The chamber pot is basically the pipkin or three-legged cooking pot form without legs; until recently, this shape in the archaeological record has been misidentified as a cooking pot, leading researchers to believe that there were no ceramic chamber pots in Virginia prior to 1640. This affinity between the cooking pot and the chamber pot is apparent in the medieval period and suggests the chamber pot's evolution as a specialized vessel.<sup>31</sup> The form has a rounded rim with an interior ledge for a lid. The single vertical loop handle is pulled from the rim and is applied, by swiping at each side, over mid-section cordoning. The base, as in the mug form, is folded and rounded. This form is glazed on the interior only.

Cooking pots formed a substantial part of the Jamestown potter's ceramic repertoire. Throughout the medieval and post-medieval periods, the ceramic cooking pot, mirroring metal shapes, grew in popularity. The pottery vessel soon showed its advantage in that it could be placed directly on the fire and left unattended for long periods of time without boiling dry. This made it a particularly suitable container for the slow cooking of stews and boiled meats. Indeed, some researchers believe that the increased use of pottery vessels may have prompted an heightened reliance on the one-pot meal.<sup>32</sup>

The Jamestown potter produced cooking pots in the shape of flat-bottomed cylindrical pots with two horizontal loop handles (fig. 7), and three-legged cooking pots and pipkins with one pulled handle. A similar pattern has been documented with the Martin's Hundred potter. The flat-bottomed cooking pots have an exterior V-tooled flange to support a lid. Flattened dome-shaped covers with pinched knob handles were made by the Jamestown potter to accommodate these pots. No lids that fit the pipkins or three-legged cooking pots have been recovered.



7. Some of the vessels attributed to the Jamestown potter. Left to right: chamber pot (J-34271A), flat-bottomed cooking pot (J-7583), mug (J-12195), porringer (J-43901). *National Park Service, Colonial National Historical Park.*

Pipkins, which are small three-legged cooking pots, would have been used for cooking small portions of food. In fact, pipkins are often depicted in Dutch paintings, where they can be seen being used at the table as single-serving vessels similar to porringers.<sup>33</sup> They could also have been used in the preparation of foods that require frequent stirring while cooking, such as sauces.<sup>34</sup>

Another commonly produced Jamestown vessel is the porringer (fig. 7). A small bowl-shaped vessel with a single horizontal handle, the porringer was a popular seventeenth-century form in silver and pewter as well as in earthenware. It is just large enough for a single serving, and the configuration of the handle suggests that the porringer, or "porridge pot,"<sup>35</sup> was used as a bowl for the consumption of a semi-liquid food rather than as a drinking vessel. "Porringers were well suited to serving gruel, pottage, or chowder, and thus their presence is one indication of the continuation of the one-pot

meal.”<sup>36</sup> The Jamestown porringer is usually angled outward at mid-section with cordoning just above it. The base, like those of the mug and chamber pot, is folded and rounded.

The pitcher, a large vessel for the serving of liquid at table, is a common Jamestown form (fig. 5). This ware type was virtually unknown until the late Middle Ages; its appearance is probably associated with the growing popularity of wine and its consumption at table.<sup>37</sup> The rounded body narrows to a flat base at the bottom and constricts to a slightly funnel-shaped neck at the top. A pulled strap handle is applied over a raised neck cordon at the top, similar to the mug, and is pressed against the pitcher’s midsection at the bottom, just below triple-grooved cordoning. A spout is pinched out from the neck opposite the handle. The same form, made without a spout, was used for jugs.

#### THE NANSEMOND FORT POTTER

The next evidence for pottery production occurs at the site that is being called Nansemond Fort, from its location in proximity to the Nansemond River. This was a fortified seventeenth-century settlement recently excavated by the James River Institute for Archaeology in modern-day Suffolk County (fig. 1; also see map on p. 140). Historical documentation, substantiated by the artifactual material, dates the site to the last few years of the 1640s.<sup>38</sup>

Historical research suggests that the site is located on a tract of land that was patented in 1645 by Samuel Stoughton as a re-patent of property once owned by his wife’s late husband, Michael Wilcox. The property lies in an outlying area that was particularly impacted by the Indian Massacre of 1644. Legislation was passed to encourage colonists to re-occupy these settlements, and returning settlers were instructed to have at least ten armed and equipped men in their compounds to guard against Indian attack. By February 1645, when the settlers were slow to return to their land, the colony’s leaders threatened them with loss of their patents.<sup>39</sup> At this time Stoughton,

a burgess in Upper Norfolk County, "may have erected a fortified compound as a means of preserving his and his wife's claim" and as "an example for others in his community."<sup>40</sup>

The material record suggests that the site was not occupied very long. The lack of wine-bottle glass points to site abandonment prior to 1650, when globular glass wine bottles are ubiquitous on Tidewater sites. Locally made earthenwares comprise the majority of the finds. A number of the wares are seconds, suggesting that they were probably made on site, if not nearby. The site represents some of the earliest settlement in the area, perhaps accounting for the need for a potter to supply ceramic needs for the lonely outpost.

#### *Nansemond Fort Pottery Forms*

Examination of the vessels reveals that they are all utilitarian forms used for cooking and preparing of food and for consuming beverages. Vessel forms include three-legged cooking pots, pans, chafing dishes, shallow dishes or trays, cups, and porringers (fig. 8).

8. Assemblage of some of the Nansemond Fort potter's forms. Left to right: shallow dish, HOA 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>"; cooking pot (missing its three legs), HOA 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>", DOA 5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>"; chafing dish, HOA 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>" (inc.), base dia. 4<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>"; and cup (front), HOA 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>" (inc.), base dia. 2<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub>". *Virginia Company Foundation, Audrey Noel Hume Center for Archaeological Research.*



All forms except the cups and porringers are glazed on the interior only. The rims of all the large hollow wares are formed by folding and pressing tightly against the exterior of the vessel. The ware is usually very low-fired, the fabric appearing buff and sandy with the characteristic lead glaze yellow to light orange in color. On the higher-fired wares, the fabric appears gray and the lead glaze a bright olive green. The bases of the low-fired wares typically show scratches or marks left by the surfaces upon which they were left to dry.

The identity of the Nansemond potter is unknown and his wares have not, as yet, been identified as appearing on any other sites. The Lower Norfolk County records of 1652 contain an interesting entry that suggests that an itinerant potter named Henry Merritt was at work in the area at this time.<sup>41</sup> It is possible that the Nansemond Fort potter was not a regular member of the compound's household, but a traveling potter, like the potter(s) at Martin's Hundred and Jamestown, who fired up wares on site as demand required.

#### THE GREEN SPRING POTTER

Just prior to 1650, another potter was producing utilitarian earthenwares at Green Spring plantation (fig. 1).<sup>42</sup> Situated three and a half miles north of Jamestown, Green Spring was built between 1646 and 1650 by Governor Berkeley, who lived there until his death in 1677. Berkeley's plantation complex was considered without peer in the Virginia colony.<sup>43</sup> The Green Spring pottery is dated from c.1646, when construction began on Green Spring, to c.1650, based on contexts at Jamestown and nearby Governor's Land where it has been found. Less than two hundred total vessels were identified at the kiln site, suggesting that the potter was not in production long at that location.<sup>44</sup>

The kiln was located in 1954 through National Park Service excavations conducted under the direction of Louis Caywood.<sup>45</sup> The brick-walled kiln foundation, laid in English bond, was re-excavated in 1980 by James Smith. It was found to consist of a 10.9 x 11.1 foot

area with a 3.4 x 4 foot rectangular firebox.<sup>46</sup> This structure is unusual for a pottery kiln, but the evidence uncovered by Smith seems irrefutable. The interior surfaces of the bricks in the structure were highly fired and covered with a blistered wood-ash glaze, and the floor of the kiln consisted of high-fired clay. In addition, the foundation contained large quantities of pottery wasters and glaze-covered tile fragments that would have been used as props and spacers during firing.<sup>47</sup> Smith speculated that the original purpose of the structure was as a clamp, or pile of bricks built for burning in the open air, used to fire up tiles for the roof of the Green Spring manor. Some tiles from the latter, bearing lead runs, appear identical to those found in the kiln.<sup>48</sup>

Control of the kiln or clamp temperature appears to have presented some problems for the potter, since many of the wares are warped and have glazes fired to an almost black color. These results are consistent with a reduced firing atmosphere caused by poorly burning wood, which produces a great deal of smoke in the initial stages of firing. The fabrics range for the most part from light to brick red; the vessels, which are lead glazed, tend to be large with thick walls. Many of the vessels exhibit heavy throwing rings or finger marks, but the forms are well made. Like the potters at Martin's Hundred and Jamestown, the Green Spring potter appears to have been an accomplished potter struggling to replicate the wares he once made in England with the clays, glazes, and kiln temperatures of the New World.

### *Green Spring Pottery Forms*

Eleven different forms have been identified as Green Spring pottery, including such customary utilitarian vessels as storage jars, pans, pitchers, chamber pots, mugs, pipkins, colanders, dishes, and candlesticks. In addition, the Green Spring potter produced a form for a specialized industrial function, the sugar cone (fig. 9). As its name suggests, this is a cone-shaped vessel, ranging in height from 18 to 21 inches, used as a mold in sugar refining. This vessel form has





9. Sugar cone, LOA II" (inc.), produced by the Green Spring potter. *National Park Service, Colonial National Historical Park. Body fragment, G-2000B; bottom opening fragment, G-0400.*

been found on other Virginia archaeological sites,<sup>49</sup> but none from such an early context. Its production at Green Spring attests to Berkeley's involvement in the growing coastal trade with the West Indies.

Sugar molds were made in the colonies, but those imported from England were preferred by colonial consumers who did not mind paying the higher cost.<sup>50</sup> The vessel is unglazed to allow moisture in the sugar to evaporate. It is very thick-walled at the rim, narrowing at the bottom to a thick-lipped mouth. Throwing rings are evident at the base, with knife trimming at the rim. Sugar syrup would be poured into one of these molds, which sat upright with a plug in the base, and left to crystallize. Once the sugar had hardened, it would be removed from the mold with a knife. In order to remove the hardened loaf easily, it had to be perfectly conical.<sup>51</sup> The irregular vertical scratches covering the interior of these forms may have resulted from the difficulties encountered when the sugar maker tried to remove the hardened sugar from the crudely shaped cone (fig. 9a).

Another unusual form produced by the Green Spring potter is the garden urn (fig. 10). Only one of these vessels was excavated at

9a. Gouges on interior surface of sugar cone from fig. 9, probably caused when the sugar makers attempted to remove the hardened sugar from the mold.



10. Garden urn base and rim, LOA 5'4", produced by the Green Spring potter.  
*National Park Service, Colonial National Historical Park, G-5364.*



11. Large storage jar bearing the Green Spring potter's signature of three thumb impressions for attachment of the handle, HOA 14", Rim dia. 9". *National Park Service, Colonial National Historical Park, J-43390.*

Green Spring plantation, and none has been recovered from other sites containing Green Spring pottery.<sup>52</sup> It may have been an experimental form produced to accommodate Berkeley's interest in gardening, which is evident in the gardens and greenhouse discovered during Caywood's archaeological investigations.<sup>53</sup> Although very different from the other utilitarian forms made by this potter, it has the same red fabric and thick-walled profile as his other wares. The urn has a knife-trimmed pedestaled base and is covered with a thin white wash. It incorporates molded reliefs of a devil and a cherub, although the cherub takes a minor role.

An additional form for which only one example was located is the candlestick. It appears to be a kiln waster, since it is unglazed and missing its base. Even in its incomplete state, the candlestick's elegant form is perceptible. Its cylindrical knopped socket with incised rings is reflective of brass and silver candlesticks of the mid-seventeenth century.

Large storage jars with handles, about 15 inches in height, make up one-third of the identifiable vessels.<sup>54</sup> The jar form, as shown in figure 11, characteristically has a slightly everted rim and is glazed on the interior only. Two large round-sectioned loop handles were applied to the vessel's midsection with the Green Spring potter's signature three thumb impressions. Four cordons encircle the vessel just below the handle attachment. Small storage jars without handles, about 6½ inches in height, were formed in the same way.

Large dishes about 16 inches in diameter resemble seventeenth-century Anglo-Netherlandish tin-glazed earthenware chargers. They have sloping side walls with fully everted rims and thick foot rings at the bases. The bases of the foot rings are not flat but slope slightly inward toward the center; this is characteristic of Dutch delftware dishes and chargers and may point to the ethnicity of the potter (fig. 12). The interior lead glaze ranges from light brown to deep black. The latter is probably, as mentioned earlier, the result of contact with smoke produced by improperly burning fuel in the kiln. The exterior of the base and side walls shows tool trimming.

As with the Jamestown potter, pans were the most common form

12. Exterior of large dish produced by the Green Spring potter, showing the inward-sloping foot-ring. *National Park Service, Colonial National Historical Park, G-2410.*





13. Pitcher (G-5388), HOA  $10\frac{1}{2}$ " (inc.), Base dia.  $4\frac{1}{2}$ " and mug (J-2410), HOA  $4\frac{1}{2}$ ", Rim dia. 3", produced by the Green Spring potter. *National Park Service, Colonial National Historical Park.*

made by the Green Spring potter. Unlike the bowl-shaped pans of earlier potters, the Green Spring pan was wider and not as tall.

The pitcher, about 10 inches high, is the only vessel type from this site with exterior and interior glaze (fig. 13). Like the Jamestown pitcher, it has a folded and rounded base, but it differs in its bulbous shape and straight-sided neck. As with the large Green Spring jar, the strap handle is attached to the vessel's midsection by three thumb impressions. The handle is reinforced where it joins the body by an extra roll of clay applied beneath the handle and pushed down over the handle terminal.

The mugs are of a globular form, carinated and cordoned at midgirth, with a finished foot (fig. 13). There is a raised cordon at

the base of the collar neck, over which the top of the strap handle is applied.

#### THE MORGAN JONES POTTER

The four potting concerns thus far discussed, except for the Nansemond Fort site, were located in the primary area of seventeenth-century Virginia settlement, along the James River between Jamestown and Carter's Grove. The potters were supplying wares for a very localized market. A 1973 excavation of a kiln site in Westmoreland County revealed that by the second half of the century this pattern was changing to one of potters participating in a wider regional economy (fig. 1).<sup>55</sup>

Historical documentation associates the property with "Morgan Jones, Potter" in the year 1677.<sup>56</sup> Morgan Jones's aesthetically pleasing coarseware has not only been found on neighboring Westmoreland County sites, but in contexts dating to the second half of the seventeenth century throughout the Chesapeake area from St. Mary's City, Maryland, to Jamestown and its vicinity. It is unlikely that all the wares attributed to Morgan Jones emanated from this one kiln that operated for only four short months in 1677. It is known that a pottery existed in Westmoreland County, associated with Jones, as early as 1669. In that year, according to the Westmoreland County records, Morgan Jones assigned a local merchant:

My share of ye earthenware that I have made this year at ye Potthouse at Mr. Quigley's Plantation and also my share of ware which I shall by God's Grace make this present year upon ye said plantation and all my share of lead ovens<sup>57</sup> that I have there in my possession.<sup>58</sup>

In August 1677, Dennis White and Morgan Jones agreed to become partners for five years in the making and selling of earthenware. During that time, Dennis White was to find three men to help in this endeavor and, in return, would receive one-half of the profits.<sup>59</sup> That same year, Morgan Jones is documented as buying the Glebe Harbor property upon which the kiln was found. Unfortu-

nately, White died by the end of the same year, and the property reverted to its previous owner.<sup>60</sup>

From historical documentation we also know that in 1681 Morgan Jones was in Lower Norfolk County, Virginia, and that he died about ten years later in Dorset County, Maryland.<sup>61</sup> Perhaps future research, coupled with archaeological investigation, will uncover the sites of other kilns operated by Jones and thereby further elucidate the products of this very accomplished potter.

The kiln plan, as revealed by excavation,<sup>62</sup> was typical of rural seventeenth-century English pottery kilns. It consisted of an 8'6" x 6'6" ovoid central oven with four flues. Two of these flues or firemouths had stoking pits. The central oven was bisected into two pedestaled areas that supported the vessels to be fired. Six-inch wide channels, which were ten inches deep, encircled the pedestaled area and served to circulate the heat. Burned bricks found lying on the oven floor suggest a brick superstructure.

Morgan Jones pottery has a buff-to-pink fabric containing numerous large hematite inclusions. The wares are coated predominantly on the interior with a clear lead glaze that appears yellow to pale orange and olive green. The hematite inclusions are visible through the glaze. Candlesticks, mugs and pitcher necks appear to be the only vessel forms to have exterior glazing.

#### *Morgan Jones Pottery Forms*

The overwhelming majority of shapes from this site are storage jars and pans. The pans have neatly folded rims with a deep incised line running around the interior rim edge (fig. 14). A few of the interior bases were marked with an asterisk or sunburst stamp (fig. 16), although this mark is not commonly found.

Also represented are pitchers, chamber pots, pipkins, candlesticks in the form of short chamber sticks, mugs in bulbous and bag shapes (fig. 15), bowls, and cooking pots. Many of the jars, bowls, and cooking pots have a distinctive notched decoration on the rim and flange (fig. 16). This notching is believed to have been done with a

14. Morgan Jones  
pan, dia. 11<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub>". *National Park Service,  
Colonial National  
Historical Park.*  
J-7301.



15. Bag-shaped mug (J-11813), HOA 2<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>", rim dia. 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub>", and bulbous mug (J-47317), HOA 3<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>",  
rim dia. 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub>", forms produced by Morgan Jones. *National Park Service, Colonial National His-  
torical Park.*





16. Morgan Jones jars with the characteristic notching at the rim and the stamped asterisk mark found on the interior of some pans. *Morgan Jones Pottery Kiln Site, Virginia Department of Historic Resources.*

rouletting wheel, and different repetitious imperfections suggest that several different wheels were used.<sup>63</sup>

#### THE CHALLIS POTTER

Chronologically, the next known potting industry is back on the banks of the James River near Jamestown. The wares associated with this potter appear in archaeological contexts dating from c.1690 to 1730, and have been given the name Challis after an indentured servant Edward Challis. A 1683 map shows that the area of the site was rented by Challis, although there is no evidence that he was the potter.<sup>64</sup> The site was identified in 1961 by Ivor Noël Hume, who found no kiln, but rather large piles of wasters and slabs of sandstone with the marks of the pots that had been fired on them. In addition, many of the jar rims bore bits of that same sandstone.<sup>65</sup> Challis wares are often misshapen and discolored (fig. 17), suggesting that the potter was not as technically competent as Morgan Jones, especially in maintaining kiln temperatures. He must have successfully fulfilled a ceramic need, however, for his vessels are commonly found on



17. Warped Challis jar  
found in a Jamestown well.  
HOA 10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>". *National Park  
Service, Colonial National  
Historical Park, J-7598.*



18. Challis pan, dia. 9". *Na-  
tional Park Service, Colonial  
National Historical Park,  
J-603.*

Williamsburg area sites, even what we would consider wasters or seconds. The fabric of the ware ranges from pale pink to gray, flecked with hematite, with the clear lead glaze appearing yellow or olive to olive brown, often streaked with orange. The forms are the usual utilitarian wares of jars ranging from 8½ to 13 inches high, pans (fig. 18), bowls, pipkins, pitchers, dishes, colanders, cups, and chamber pots. No report exists yet for the Challis material, which is in a private collection, but it is hoped that this important assemblage may be documented in the near future.<sup>66</sup> More detailed descriptions are important in light of what appears to be a contemporary coarseware potting endeavor, known as Lawnes Creek, which has been recently recognized.

#### LAWNES CREEK POTTER

The Lawnes Creek potter was identified by the Department of Historic Resources based on wasters found on Lawnes Creek in Isle of Wight County, on the south side of the James River (fig. 1). Little else is known about this potting enterprise except that the wares are very similar to Challis and that they have been found on eastern shore of Virginia sites as well as Isle of Wight and Jamestown and vicinity.<sup>67</sup> Lawnes Creek wares have the same forms as Challis, while the fabric is sandier and the wares are fired at a lower temperature, resulting in a light olive-green glaze. It is most likely that Challis and the Isle of Wight potter are one and the same, and that the differences can be explained by their differing clay sources. As with the Martin's Hundred and Jamestown potter, if this could be proven, it would lend credence to the "itinerant potter" theory that colonial potters were mobile, setting up rudimentary kilns wherever they could find a market for their wares and then moving on when the market had been saturated. An organized attempt to find the Lawnes Creek kiln has not yet been undertaken, but the site where the wasters were located has not been developed, so there is hope that this may still be possible.

The last "potter" to be discussed is unique: in addition to historical documentation giving him a name, William Rogers, he is the first Virginia potter to produce stonewares (fig. 1). Operating in Yorktown between 1720 and 1745, the William Rogers pottery kiln produced lead-glazed coarsewares and salt-glazed stonewares that were extremely well made. They appear to have been exported to the West Indies, as well as to most major ports along the east coast.<sup>68</sup> Despite this thriving industry, which has been confirmed by the excavation of his kiln complex between 1966 and 1982 by the College of William and Mary, very little documentary information is available on William Rogers or his wares.<sup>69</sup> In fact, William Rogers was not the actual potter, but rather came to Virginia in 1711 as a brewer. He soon turned his entrepreneurial skills to various mercantile activities, including pottery.<sup>70</sup> He is known as the "poor potter" from reports relating to manufactures in Virginia that were written by Virginia Governor William Gooch to the English Board of Trade between 1732 and 1741. Gooch appears to have deliberately hidden the extent of Rogers's business from the British government, which may have interpreted it as a threat to the home export pottery trade. This intent seems quite clear in a 1736 report by Gooch, which is typical of his entries on William Rogers; it states that "the same poor Potter's Work is still continued at York Town without any great improvement or Advantage to the Owner, or any Injury to the Trade of Great Britain."<sup>71</sup>

Unlike the other potting concerns thus far discussed, Rogers' business was a factory producing a wide range of forms for a far-reaching market. Rogers was probably not the master craftsman of the pottery, but rather a master of finance, production, and marketing. His thriving business seems to have ceased soon after his death in 1739.

The 1720 date for the beginning of pottery production is based on the discovery of what appears to be a dedicatory burial of two vessels beside one of the kiln walls (fig. 19).<sup>72</sup> The first vessel is a porringer



19. Two vessels comprising the dedicatory burial at the William Rogers pottery kiln. Cup (Y-7097), HOA 3", and porringer (Y-7096), HOA 3¾", Rim dia. 6½". *National Park Service, Colonial National Historical Park.*



19a. Detail of the porringer from fig. 19, showing the initials "AC" and the date "1720." It establishes the beginning date of William Rogers pottery production.

which is a “Rogers” product, beautifully turned, with a nicely executed upturned handle that has decorative incising on the upper surface. Interestingly, the porringer bears the incised initials “AC” or “AG” and the date “1720” on the exterior wall beneath the handle (fig. 19a). The porringer was found upside down, covering a tin-glazed earthenware cup. The cup is painted with a Ming-inspired design, which is identical to one in the L.L. Lipski collection in London and attributed to Lambeth, c. 1690–1700.<sup>73</sup> Interestingly, there is indirect evidence, in the form of correspondence, that links William Rogers with relatives living near Lambeth, which was a large pottery production area on the Thames River south of London. It is possible that he came from there.<sup>74</sup>

The significance of the seemingly purposeful burial of these two vessels is not presently known. It is possible that it represents the agreement between William Rogers from Lambeth and his master potter, who could have been English or, perhaps, German. The latter is suggested by the Germanic formation of the porringer’s “A”, with its chevron crossbar, and by some of the pottery forms such as betty lamps and stove tiles. The rectangular shape of the kiln, which differs from the traditional circular plan for English earthenware or stoneware kilns, may also point to Continental influence.<sup>75</sup> The rectangular kilns in England are usually associated with the firing of delftware, although recent excavation on John Dwight’s stoneware pottery at Fulham has revealed that he used this same rectangular kiln plan from the 1670s to the mid-eighteenth century.<sup>76</sup>

The quantity of vessels and the variations in rim and handle formations indicates that there was more than one potter at work producing Rogers’s pottery. There is some evidence to suggest that many of the potters may have been slaves. At the time of his death in 1739, Rogers had one servant but owned thirty-six slaves.<sup>77</sup> In addition, a number of cowrie shells were found in the excavations of the kiln and workshop area. These shells, which are frequently recovered archaeologically on eighteenth-century African-American slave sites in Tidewater Virginia, originate in the West Indies and along the In-

dian Ocean and were used as currency in Africa. Many of the kiln products, especially the bisque wares, bear fingerprints. It is hoped that study of these clues from the past may eventually yield information about the number, race, and gender of Rogers's potters.<sup>78</sup>

### *William Rogers Pottery Forms*

Twenty-three forms have been identified among William Rogers's extremely well-made wares from the kiln excavation. Some of the forms have only been documented at the kiln site and do not appear elsewhere in the archaeological record, perhaps indicating that these were made solely for export.<sup>79</sup> Twenty-one of the forms were produced in earthenware and fifteen in stoneware, and nearly all the wares were bisque-fired.<sup>80</sup> Bisque firing, or firing vessels before glazing, is an unusual practice with salt-glazed stoneware vessels but perhaps was a step taken to make these vessels stronger to withstand breakage during kiln stacking.<sup>81</sup>

Forms that were only made in earthenware include chafing dishes, funnels, porringers, betty lamps, bird bottles, cream pots, platters, and stove tiles. The tiles are one of the most interesting forms made by the Yorktown pottery and again suggest a Continental origin for at least one of the potters. Found only in bisque form, these tiles (numbering about forty-four) have a face molded with a pomegranate and swag design. Stove tiles "would have been used either for paneling on walls or ceilings or as free-standing stoves" and are very rare in English contexts outside London.<sup>82</sup> They are a more common German form and have been documented among the wares made by the Moravians in North Carolina in the eighteenth century.<sup>83</sup>

The only stoneware forms that were not also made in earthenware consist of floor tiles and kiln furniture such as saggars, props, and spacers. The kiln furniture comprises one of the most significant collections of material from an American kiln and provides much information about how the wares were stacked and fired in the kiln. The saggars, made in three sizes, were apparently produced solely to protect Rogers's stoneware mugs during the firing process.<sup>84</sup> The mug

was Rogers's most skillfully produced form; its thin turned walls, cordoned bases, and graceful strap handle equal any made in Fulham in the early eighteenth century. Like their English contemporaries, many of the mugs are also stamped with a crowned "WR." Probably standing for William Rex, not William Rogers, these marks were most likely excise stamps used, as in England, to certify capacity.<sup>85</sup>

The forms made in both stoneware and earthenware, and believed to have been fired in the same kiln, are bottles, bowls, chamber pots, churns, colanders, jugs, milk pans, mugs, pipkins, plates, sauce pans, storage jars, and teapots.

The fabric of Rogers's earthenwares ranges from a reddish orange to a buff color and exhibit large red hematite inclusions (fig. 2). Lead glazing of the earthenwares produced an orange to brown color with dark brown flecks. Stoneware fabrics are uniformly gray and resemble the English stoneware fabrics, except that they manifest tiny black specks resembling the ground-up bean in vanilla ice cream. In addition, the margins of the stonewares are often gray from a reduced firing atmosphere. The majority of the stoneware forms were slipped on the upper half with iron oxide and appear darker brown or reddish brown in that area; otherwise, stonewares are brown to gray with a mottled appearance from the salt glazing.

The William Rogers pottery kiln material represents a significant archaeological collection not only for the record of vessels produced and the information it provides on the infrastructure of an early eighteenth-century pottery kiln. The wide range of forms indicates dietary changes occurring in the early eighteenth century, as well as the increasing importance of ceramics in the day-to-day lives of the colonists. It also provides an insight into the underground colonial economy that apparently operated with impunity in the face of very restrictive English laws. As Norman Barka wrote in his study of Rodgers's production, "The poor potter and his pioneering industrial efforts testify to the increasing independence of American industry."<sup>86</sup>



## CONCLUSIONS

This summary of the colonial Virginia potters has shown that once the initial period of settlement had passed, potters began providing utilitarian wares to fulfill the foodways requirements of the colonists. The first potters probably did not have a settled workshop, but were required to travel to their markets, at least periodically, to produce and fire up requested wares. The wares, although principally utilitarian, lead-glazed coarsewares, were not unsophisticated vessels made by untrained novices. They were instead well-constructed vessels, often with thoughtful decorative derailing, that reflected the work of skilled artisans. No matter how well made, however, when the vessels were fabricated with an incompatible glaze and fabric or were subjected to an uneven and uncontrollable firing, the outcome was less than perfect. Not representative of the potters' capabilities, these imperfect specimens should testify, rather, to the difficulties these craftsmen faced replicating in the New World the conditions and materials that tradition had accustomed them to in Europe.

By the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, potters, though still not numerous, had become firmly established in the Virginia landscape. Results were more consistently uniform. Kiln temperatures and clay and glaze sources no longer seemed to interfere with achieving the desired results. As local populations grew denser, the potters no longer needed to travel great distances to their markets. One result was that they began building substantial kiln structures. The wares of Virginia potters start appearing along eastern coastal shipping routes, which suggests a change in the marketing of pottery. The potter no longer had to be both pot maker and pot seller, but could devote himself full-time to his craft.

Clearly much more can be learned about Virginia's early potting industry. It is entirely possible that further excavation and research on Virginia's archaeological sites will add to the record presently unknown potters, who were producing for a very localized market. In fact, the products of some of those potters may be residing, unnoticed, in collections excavated long ago. It is hoped that this study

will encourage curators of Virginia seventeenth and eighteenth-century archaeological collections to closely examine their assemblages for these local wares. Only when all these vessels are identified can Virginia's pottery industry be completely understood.

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#### NOTES

1. Robert Beverley, *The History and Present State of Virginia*, 1705, ed. Louis B. Wright, (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1968), 128.

2. This study is based on visual examination of fabrics, glazes and forms which can be complicated, especially when dealing with kiln wasters or seconds. Other tools for ceramic study, as spectroscopy, X-ray fluorescence, and petrological analysis, eliminate the possibility for human error by transforming visual data into numbers that can be manipulated and compared objectively. Dr. Thomas Davidson of Jamestown Settlement is currently analyzing seventeenth-century ceramics using electronic image processing, which is providing some very promising results. His preliminary work has shown that even though local wares have the same inclusions of quartz, feldspar, quartzite and red and black hematite, they can be distinguished one from another both on the basis of inclusion percentage and inclusion size (personal communication).

3. French potters formed both handles and spouts on the wheel, in contrast to the English technique of hand-forming these elements (Michael R. McCarthy and Catherine M. Brooks, *Medieval Pottery in Britain A.D. 900-1600* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1988), 30.

4. David Crossley, *Post-Medieval Archaeology in Britain* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1990), 288-89.

5. Lorna Weatherill, *The Pottery Trade and North Staffordshire 1660-1760* (Manchester, England, 1971), 53.

6. Cary Carson, "The Consumer Revolution in Colonial British America: Why Demand?" *Of Consuming Interests* (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1994), 530.

7. The material from excavations at Martin's Hundred is curated by the Department of Archaeology, the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. Some of the Martin's Hundred pottery is displayed in the Wolstenholme exhibit at Carter's Grove in Williamsburg.

8. Martha W. McCartney, Research Note, "The Martin's Hundred Potter: English North America's Earliest Master of His Trade," in this issue of the *Journal*.

9. Annie Lash Jester and Martha Woodroof Hiden, eds., *Adventurers of Purse and Person, Virginia 1607-1625* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1956), 44. Ward is recorded as arriving in the colony on the *Warwick*, which deposited colonists in 1621.

10. Ivor Noel Hume, *Martin's Hundred* (New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1979), 128-29.

11. *Ibid.*, 103.
12. McCarthy and Brooks, 120.
13. Some of the English herbals were William Turner's *A New Herball* (1551), Henry Lyte's *Neue Herball* (1578), and Gerard's *Herball or General Historie of Planets* (1597).
14. There is documentary evidence from the medieval and post-medieval periods of potters manufacturing lead glaze by melting scrap lead. The resultant lead oxide powder is mixed with water and applied to leather-hard pottery (McCarthy and Brooks, 35–38).
15. Noël Hume, *Martin's Hundred*, 200.
16. Personal communication, Cary Carson, Vice President of Research, the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.
17. John L. Cotter, "Archaeological Excavations at Jamestown Virginia," *Archaeological Society of Virginia Special Publication Number 32*, (1994), 110–12.
18. Ivor Noël Hume, *Here Lies Virginia* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1994), 211.
19. Alain Charles Outlaw, *Governor's Land* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1990), 189.
20. Clive Orton, Paul Tyers, and Alan Vince, *Pottery in Archaeology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 127.
21. The largest collection of the Jamestown potter's wares is in the Colonial National Historical Park at Jamestown. The Jamestown potter is a particular focus of research currently being undertaken by the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation under a cooperative agreement with the National Park Service. This study, conducted by Robert Hunter and Beverly Straube, will define and illustrate the potter's forms and attempt to determine if he and the Martin's Hundred potter are the same. It is hoped that a study of the forms may lead to a determination of where the potter learned his craft.
22. Crossley, 250.
23. Elisabeth de Schipper, Joop Witteveen, Karel Vlierman, Johannes van Dam, *Quintessens*, Catalog of an Exhibition at Museum Boymans-van Beunigen, Rotterdam (Rotterdam, 1992), 19.
24. McCarthy and Brooks, 115.
25. A chafing dish attributed to William Rogers, potter in Yorktown c. 1720–45, was excavated by the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation near the Coke-Garrett House. See Audrey Noël Hume, *Food* (Williamsburg, 1978), 33.
26. Randle Holme, *The Academy of Armory, or a Storehouse of Armory and Blazon*, Book III, Chapter 14 (Chester, 1688), 11.
27. Anne Yentsch, "Chesapeake Artefacts and Their Cultural Context: Pottery and the Food Domain," *Post-Medieval Archaeology* 25 (1991), 25–72.
28. McCarthy and Brooks, 115.
29. Noël Hume, *Martin's Hundred*, 195.
30. Jacqueline Pearce, *Border Wares* (London: HMSO, 1992), 27–28.
31. There are medieval period illustrations depicting cooking pots in use as chamber pots as well as recipes calling for urine in the cooking pot (McCarthy and Brooks, 115–16). This affinity between the chamber pot and cooking pot forms persists through the post-medieval period. Edward A. Chappell points out that in the late eighteenth century, diarist Louis-Phillipe recorded that he was given a cooking pot to use as a chamber pot when there was no window convenient to urinate from. (Edward A. Chappell, "Housing a Nation: The Transformation of Living Standards in Early America," in *Of Consuming Interests* edited by Cary Carson *et al.* [Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1994], 169).

32. McCarthy and Brooks, 123.
33. Maryellen Spencer, *Food in Seventeenth-Century Tidewater Virginia: A Method for Studying Historical Cuisines* (Ph.D. dissertation, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 1982).
34. McCarthy and Brooks, 107.
35. H. J. L. J. Massé, *Chats on Old Pewter* (London: T. Fisher Unwin Ltd., 1923), 184.
36. Yentsch, 41.
37. McCarthy and Brooks, 110.
38. Dateable objects from the site (44SK192) include clay tobacco pipes and a Dutch delftware dish imitating Chinese kraack porcelain. Artifacts and notes are held by the Virginia Company Foundation, 2080 Jamestown Road, Williamsburg, Virginia 23185. The Virginia Company Foundation has recently received grants from the Richard Bennett Trust and the Jorman Group to write up the site and artifacts, including an analysis of the pottery.
39. William W. Hering, ed., *The Statues at Large: Being a Collection of All the Laws of Virginia*, I (Richmond: Samuel Pleasants, 1809), 285–86, 291–94.
40. Martha W. McCartney, "The Harbor View Fort," unpublished manuscript on file at the James River Institute for Archaeology, Williamsburg, Virginia, 1995.
41. The citation for the potter located in the vicinity of Nansemond Fort in the mid-seventeenth century reads as follows: "In cause betw Thomas Ivey pltf and Hency Merritt dft, order that Merritt 'returne to the house of the said Ivey and there to use his best industry for the finishing upp of one kill of Earthen Ware: the said Ivey assisting him with two men according to a condi'con made betweene them. And the said Ivey to gett the Kill finished upp fittinge to burne the aforesaid Earthen Weare. And further the said Ivey is to bringe in a full and just account of all disbursments and receipts whatsoever laid out or received by the said Ivey since their partnership at the next court. If the work not performed Ivey to deliver to Merritt his bedd and workinge Tooles with Corne to keepe him till the next Court and then to be heard and determined." *Virginia Colonial Abstracts* vol. 31, Lower Norfolk County 1651–1654 pp. 10–11.
42. The Green Spring archaeological collection is curated by the National Park Service and stored in their collections at Colonial National Historical Park, Jamestown.
43. Thomas Tileston Waterman, *The Mansions of Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1946), 19–20.
44. Smith, 96.
45. Lewis R. Caywood, *Green Spring Plantation* (Yorktown, 1955).
46. James M. Smith, *The Pottery and Kilm of Green Spring: A Study in 17th Century Material Culture* (M.A. thesis, College of William & Mary, 1981), 36–38.
47. Smith, 38.
48. Smith, 52–53.
49. Numerous fragments of sugar refining pottery were excavated in Alexandria, Virginia, at the Moore-McLean Sugar Refinery site, which operated in the first quarter of the nineteenth century.
50. Benjamin Silliman, *Manual on the Cultivation of the Sugar Cane and the Fabrication and Refinement of Sugar* (Washington, D.C.: Francis Preston, 1833).
51. J. P. Allan, *Medieval and Post-medieval Finds from Exeter, 1971–1980* (Exeter, U.K.: Exeter City Council and The University of Exeter, 1984), 139.
52. Horticultural wares such as decorative urns were excavated at Basing House, England, from a mid-seventeenth century context (Peter C. D. Brears, "Finds From Basing House, Hampshire," *Post Medieval Archaeology* 4 (1970), 87–90) but they have not been recorded on seventeenth-century Virginia sites.

53. Caywood, 14–16.

54. Smith, 75.

55. The artifacts from the kiln excavation are housed with the Department of Historic Resources, 221 Governor Street, Richmond, Virginia. A very important report was published on the site describing the configuration of the kiln structure and documenting the pottery forms (see note 57). However, most of the material has not been washed and it is very likely that some forms were missed in the preliminary survey. There is no mention in the report, for instance, of any kiln furniture such as props or spacers that would be expected on a kiln site.

56. *Westmoreland County Deeds, Wills, Patents, Etc., 1665–1677*. (Montross, Virginia), 284.

57. As Edward Chappell has pointed out, the reference to lead ovens is either to the kilns for glazing the lead-glazed wares or to “ovens used to calcinate lead to produce a powder for glazing the pottery.” Edward A. Chappell, “Morgan Jones and Dennis White: Country Potters in Seventeenth-Century Virginia,” *Virginia Cavalcade* XXIV (1975), 150.

58. *Westmoreland County Deeds, Wills, Patents, Etc., 1665–1677* (Montross, Virginia), n.p.

59. *Ibid.*, 353–54.

60. *Westmoreland County Order Book, 1676–77 to 1688–89*, 135.

61. *Virginia Land Abstracts, Patent Book 7*, 479.

62. The site was excavated by what was then known as the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, now the Division of Historic Resources.

63. William M. Kelso and Edward A. Chappell, “Excavation of a Seventeenth Century Pottery Kiln at Glebe Harbor, Westmoreland County, Virginia,” *Historical Archaeology* VIII (1974), 60.

64. William Salt Library, Stafford England.

65. Noël Hume, *Here Lies Virginia*, 216.

66. The excavator of the Challis site, Ivor Noël Hume, holds the collection of kiln debris, but Challis pottery has been found throughout Tidewater Virginia. Collections of Challis pottery can be found at Colonial National Historical Park–Jamestown, Department of Archaeological Research of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, and the Department of Historic Resources of the State of Virginia.

67. Collections of Lawnes Creek pottery are held by the Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Virginia; Colonial National Historical Park, Jamestown, Virginia; and the Isle of Wight County Museum, Smithfield, Virginia.

68. The William Rogers kiln excavation material is curated by Colonial National Historical Park–Yorktown, which maintains an extensive study collection of the site. The artifacts were recently cataloged according to the Automated National Cataloging System by the James River Institute for Archaeology, and are accessible for study.

69. Norman F. Barka, Edward Ayres, and Christine Sheridan, *The “Poor Potter” of Yorktown: A Study of a Colonial Pottery Factory*, vol. 2: *Archaeology*, Yorktown Research Series no. 5 (Williamsburg, Va.: College of William & Mary, 1984).

70. Norman F. Barka, Edward Ayres, and Christine Sheridan, *The “Poor Potter” of Yorktown: A Study of a Colonial Pottery Factory*, vol. 1: *History*, Yorktown Research Series no. 5 (Williamsburg, Va.: College of William & Mary, 1984), 20.

71. *Ibid.*, 125. From records in the Public Record Office, “William Gooch to the Board of Trade, May 19, 1736,” Colonial Office 5/1324/20–21.

72. Norman F. Barka, “The Kiln and Ceramics of the ‘Poor Potter’ of Yorktown: A Preliminary Report,” *Ceramics in America*, edited by Ian M.G. Quimby (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1973), 293.

73. F. H. Garner and Michael Archer, *English Delftware* (London, 1972), 15.

74. Barka et al., *The Poor Potter*, vol. 1, 19.

75. Barka, "The Kiln and Ceramics of the 'Poor Potter,'" 312-14.
76. Crossley, 174.
77. Barka *et al.*, *The Poor Potter*, vol. 1, 28.
78. Fingerprint analysis was initiated on the Virginia Tidewater potters by Dr. Warren Barber of the State University of New York, Buffalo, 1989. Dr. Barber was building on a data base he initiated during his doctoral study of the potters of household figurines in Teotihuacan. Using computer imaging to read patterns and measurements, he was able to successfully document diachronic gender shifts during 1,000 years of pottery production. Gender determination is based on the width and spacing of finger ridges. Dr. Barber believes that the development of technology will allow more sophisticated measurements resulting in the identification of age and race through fingerprint analysis. Many samples were taken from the Rogers pottery, but the analysis was never completed after grant moneys were withdrawn. This research holds great promise for understanding the make-up of the work force of an early colonial industry.
79. Rogers's forms which have not been uncovered on other eighteenth-century sites in the Tidewater include betty lamps, slip-decorated platters, churns, molded stove tiles, floor tiles, plates, and tea pots.
80. Norman F. Barka, Edward Ayres, and Christine Sheridan, *The "Poor Potter of Yorktown": A Study of a Colonial Pottery Factory*, vol. 3: *Ceramics*, Yorktown Research Series no. 5 (Williamsburg, Va.: College of William & Mary, 1984), 343.
81. *Ibid.*, 550.
82. Alan Thompson, Francis Grew, and John Schofield, "Excavations at Aldgate, 1974," *Post-Medieval Archaeology* 18 (London, 1984), 77.
83. John Bivins, Jr., *The Moravian Potters in North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: The University Press of North Carolina, 1972), 174-87.
84. Barka *et al.*, *The "Poor Potter,"* vol. 3, 4-8.
85. *Ibid.*, 428.
86. Barka, "The Kiln and Ceramics of the 'Poor Potter,'" 314.

# An Archaeological Perspective on Alexandria's Pottery Tradition

BARBARA H. MAGID

In October 1983, an Alexandria resident discovered the western wall of a pottery kiln in a construction trench, four feet below ground, for an underground parking structure. He informed City archaeologists working at another nearby construction site of this important find. With permission from the land owners, rescue excavations were carried out by Alexandria Archaeology staff and volunteers on the exposed portion of the kiln and the surrounding waster dump. Among the first potsherds found were fragments of an orange-colored stoneware ink bottle, stamped with a portion of a maker's mark, the letters "TILDON E." This was recognized as the name of Alexandria potter Tildon Easton, until then unknown apart from an 1841 notice in the *Alexandria Gazette*<sup>1</sup> which had languished in research files for many years. Archaeologists were able to excavate the remainder of the kiln the next year, prior to construction on the neighboring property (fig. 1).<sup>2</sup>

This find had tremendous significance for Alexandria, where extensive research on other Alexandria potters had previously been undertaken in conjunction with the archaeology program. Test excavations conducted in the late 1960s and 1970s identified the sites of the Piercy, Fisher, and Plum potteries,<sup>3</sup> helping to establish the provenance of large quantities of earthenware vessels found in wells and privies excavated on domestic and commercial sites in Alexandria. Later, a brief rescue excavation in 1977 recovered 16,000 wasters



1. Excavation of the Tildon Easton Pottery site. The brick kiln base, with flue channels and a fire box, can be seen at right. Alexandria Archaeology volunteers are excavating portions of the surrounding waster pile. The round structure at left is a later well. *Photograph courtesy of Alexandria Archaeology.*

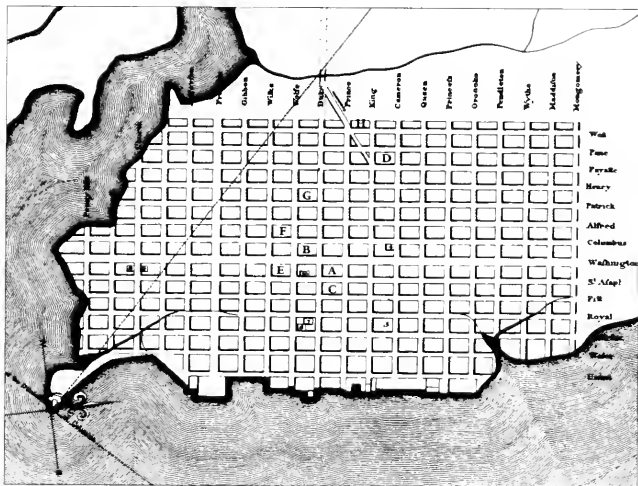
from the Wilkes Street pottery, establishing a sequence for Alexandria earthenware and stoneware through much of the nineteenth century.<sup>4</sup>

The discovery and excavation of the Tildon Easton site enhanced this base of knowledge in three ways. First, the excavation provided the first opportunity in northern Virginia or the Washington metropolitan area to examine the structural remains of a pottery kiln *in situ*.<sup>5</sup> Secondly, research into the history of Tildon Easton and contemporary potters provided evidence of local competition for the Wilkes Street pottery and a better understanding of the economics of the local stoneware industry. And finally, analysis of the 5,220 sherds of Easton's wares recovered in the excavation enabled a com-



parison with those of the Wilkes Street pottery and a better understanding of the regional style.<sup>6</sup>

Archaeological excavations at Alexandria's pottery sites were accompanied by extensive documentary research conducted under the auspices of the Smithsonian Institution and the city of Alexandria, and by individual researchers.<sup>7</sup> This research helps to illuminate the lives of Alexandria potters who supplied most of the utilitarian earthenware and stoneware used in the town and outlying communities between 1792 and 1876. In that time period, at least seventeen potters worked in Alexandria, at nine different pottery manufactories (fig. 2). Alexandria had at least five earthenware potteries. The best known and most successful was that of Henry Piercy, in opera-



2. Location of the Alexandria pottery sites, superimposed on Colonel George Gilpin's 1798 map of Alexandria. A. The Piercy pottery, 1792–1809; B. The Fisher pottery, 1795–1798; C. The Plum pottery, Prince Street, 1800; D. The Reynolds pottery, 1807; E. The Wilkes Street pottery (Swann, Smith, Milburn) 1813–1877; F. The Plum pottery, Wolfe Street, 1801–1821; G. The Black pottery, 1836; H. The Easton pottery, 1841–1843

tion from 1792 to 1809. Another early pottery was owned by Thomas Fisher from 1795 to 1798. Lewis Plum managed two potteries between 1800 and 1821, with the later pottery continuing until 1828 under the ownership of Evans and Griggs. A fourth earthenware potter, James Miller, manufactured earthenware for a local sugar refinery at some time between 1804 and 1828. Other potters working at these sites included John Piercy, Thomas Hewes, and James Hibberd. A few stoneware wasters were also found at each of the three excavated earthenware potteries (Piercy, Fisher and Plum's second pottery).

The most successful stoneware pottery was in operation from 1813 to 1876 under the successive ownership of potter John Swann, merchant Hugh Smith, potter B. C. Milburn, and Milburn's two sons. Other potters working at this site included David Jarbour and James Black, who later opened his own business. Stoneware potters William Reynolds (1807), James Black (1836), and Tildon Easton (1841 to 1843) were less successful in their ventures. Excavations at the Wilkes Street pottery and the Easton pottery shows that they continued to produce earthenware along with their main product, stoneware.

Many of these men learned the "art, trade and mystery of a potter"<sup>8</sup> through apprenticeships with other Alexandria potters, or formed short-lived partnerships with their fellow craftsmen. At first, they made coarse earthenware in the Philadelphia-Germanic style, but by the 1820s they had created a distinctive Alexandria style of cobalt-decorated salt-glazed stoneware. The production of decorative utilitarian stoneware reached its florescence at the Wilkes Street pottery in the 1830s and 1840s, only to decline twenty years later with the advent of the Civil War. This style, while having characteristics distinct to Alexandria, also has much in common with a regional style seen in Washington, D.C., the Shenandoah Valley, and Baltimore, Maryland. In this region, gray salt-glazed stoneware is generally decorated with brushed cobalt flowers and foliage. The design is usually symmetrical, radiating from a central axis, with lesser design elements such as clusters of leaves continuing on the reverse

(see fig. 10). Less often, the foliage encircles the pot. Similar designs are also executed in slip-trailed cobalt, especially by Alexandria potter B. C. Millburn (fig. 12). This contrasts, for example, with the small discrete motifs of birds or flowers common on stoneware from Vermont and New York.

The local pottery also reached a regional market. Alexandria earthenware and stoneware are found in excavations throughout the region, and collectors have found marked Alexandria stoneware as far away as West Virginia and Pennsylvania.

#### HENRY PIERCY

The earliest Alexandria earthenware, manufactured in the 1790s and the first years of the nineteenth century, is linked both stylistically and historically with Philadelphia, 150 miles to the north. The best known of Alexandria's earthenware potters is Henry Piercy, who established a pottery at Washington and Duke streets in 1792.<sup>9</sup> Piercy was one of many German potters to emigrate to America in the eighteenth century. Born in 1756 at Saarbrucken, in Lorraine, he came to Philadelphia before the age of thirteen. His older brother Christian Piercy established a pottery in Philadelphia prior to 1774 and became a well-respected master potter. Henry probably learned the craft from his brother before joining the Revolutionary Army in 1776 at the age of twenty. Sometime between 1787 and 1791 Henry moved to Trenton, New Jersey. The next year he moved on to Alexandria and opened his earthenware manufactory. Christian remained in Philadelphia, where he died of yellow fever in 1793.<sup>10</sup> Both brothers produced slip-decorated earthenware in the German tradition, similar to wares produced in their native land. The Alexandria wares can be distinguished from Philadelphia imports by the lighter color and weight of the Alexandria clay, although the shape and decoration of many vessel types are indistinguishable.<sup>11</sup>

When Piercy came to Alexandria in 1792, he found a bustling and prosperous port town with a growing population and a good trade

in tobacco, flour, corn, and wheat. Alexandria was laid out in 1749 near a group of tobacco warehouses that had been established about twenty years earlier. Its naturally protected harbor attracted Scottish merchants who helped the town evolve into a major international commercial port by the 1790s. By this time the shallow flats of the half-moon-shaped bay had been filled in and numerous docks extended out into the Potomac River, allowing one thousand ships to land each year.<sup>12</sup> In 1790, the Federal District was also laid out, including Alexandria within its boundaries. Baron Alexander von Humboldt, a visitor to the town in 1804, wrote that the town “has increased considerable since my last visit to it in the revolutionary War—it was then composed of a few scattered buildings, & chiefly along the River & which was bordered with a high bank, said bank is now cut away to make long wharfs, and the streets are here paved . . . & the Houses mostly of brick, & many of them are a good stile [*sic*] of architecture.”<sup>13</sup>

Settlers from Philadelphia, including potter Henry Piercy, were among those attracted to the booming port town over the next decades. A 1816 profile of the town, printed in the *Alexandria Gazette*, stated, “The houses are generally built of brick and upon the less modern Philadelphia plan, the most of the mechanics having been from that place.”<sup>14</sup> One of the attractions for Piercy and his contemporaries was a law, passed in 1792, exempting artisans, mechanics, and handcrafters migrating into Virginia from taxes on implements of trade, and from other taxes apart from those assessed on land. The exemption, in effect until 1826, encouraged the migration of skilled craftsmen to the town.<sup>15</sup>

Before this influx of craftsmen began in 1792, the population was smaller and its needs for pottery and other goods were met by imports. Utilitarian pottery used before this period, found in excavations of homes, taverns, and businesses in Alexandria’s commercial center, includes stoneware from Germany and England and earthenware from both England and America. Philadelphia was the main source of American pottery reaching Alexandria around

1790, as seen both from local advertisements and excavated wares.<sup>16</sup>

Piercy's advertisement for the opening of his pottery boasted that "the goodness of his ware, will ensure him the patronage of all those who wish to encourage home manufactures."<sup>17</sup> Indeed, excavations in Alexandria confirm the patronage of "home manufactures," with local wares quickly supplanting imported utilitarian wares from Philadelphia and Europe. Excavations show that between the 1790s and the 1870s the needs of the populace for utilitarian earthenware and stoneware were met almost entirely by local production.

The same advertisement described Piercy's work as "equal to any work in Philadelphia or elsewhere." It is indeed fine work, and his venture was a successful one. Still, not only were Alexandria's houses built "upon the less modern Philadelphia plan," but so were the pots produced by Piercy and his contemporaries. The slip-decorated wares made by Henry Piercy in 1792 were similar to those made by his brother in Philadelphia as early as 1774. Also, many American potters were already producing stoneware by this time, as the dangers of using lead-glazed earthenware for cooking and food storage were already well known.<sup>18</sup>

The best source of pottery attributable to Piercy is not the waster piles at the pottery site, but a deep, brick-lined privy shaft behind his King Street shop. Excavations at the pottery site produced broken fragments, and the sherds of Piercy's manufacture are mixed with those of his successors. In the privy, however, excavations revealed more than eighty vessels of Piercy's manufacture, many of them now restored and in the collection of the Alexandria Archaeology Museum.<sup>19</sup> Piercy and Graham advertised the opening of their King Street shop on June 25, 1795, selling dry goods, china, and glass.<sup>20</sup> As this shop was only occupied by the firm for a ten-month period,<sup>21</sup> the pottery from this site can be very closely dated to 1795–96. Sherds of Piercy pottery were also recovered from the site of his Fairfax Street house, also occupied in 1796.<sup>22</sup>

The pottery from the Piercy and Graham shop privy shows a wide range of vessels and glazes. Slip-decorated wares include large dishes

3. Slip-decorated earthenware dish with pie-crust rim, attributed to Henry Piercy. From the site of Piercy and Graham's shop, 1796. Yellow slip over red glaze. DOA 13". From the Alexandria Archaeology collection.



4. Earthenware attributed to Henry Piercy, ca. 1792–1798. The bowl was found at the site of Piercy and Graham's shop, and the basin and jar from nearby residential sites. From left to right: Bowl, yellow slip over brown glaze, at rim 6"; basin, yellow slip over orange glaze, at rim 14"; preserve jar, orange glaze, HOA 8", DOA 6". From the Alexandria Archaeology collection.

or chargers with a crimped pie-crust rim and yellow-combed slip decoration (fig. 3), and deep basins or pans with sloping sides, everted rims, and spirals of trailed slip (fig. 4). Some vessels also exhibit green (copper oxide) or brown (iron oxide) splotches over the orange glaze and yellowish pipe-clay slip. These splotches also appear on orange-glazed milkpans and on bowls with a yellow-slipped interior (fig. 4). Porringers, pitchers, syrup jugs, tankards, preserve jars (fig. 4) and chamber pots are lead-glazed in orange, brown, olive green, or a dark brownish-black color. Utilitarian forms with glaze only on the interior include long-handled pipkins for cooking and pots ranging from five to fourteen inches high.

Piercy owned the pottery on the northeast corner of Washington and Duke streets until his death in 1809 at the age of fifty-three. By 1799, however, the pottery was leased to others. Piercy's ill health may have prevented him from actively continuing to produce pottery as early as 1798. In that year he formed a partnership with Thomas Fisher, who had opened a pottery across the street from Piercy's in 1795.

#### OTHER EARTHENWARE POTTERS

Alexandria's early potters formed short-lived and changing partnerships, producing similar styles of earthenware at several potteries (table 1). Lewis Plum, Thomas Hewes, James Miller, John Piercy, and James Hibberd are among the names of other Alexandria earthenware potters who appear in tax and census records. Henry Piercy took Lewis Plum and his nephew John Piercy as partners in 1797, while Fisher worked with Thomas Hewes and James Miller. The next year, Piercy and Fisher formed a partnership, and a year later Plum and Hewes rented their pottery. The following year, 1800, James Hibberd rented the Piercy pottery, while Plum and Miller worked together at a pottery on Prince Street. By 1801 Plum may have moved to Wolfe Street, and in 1805, Hewes and Miller were working at the Piercy pottery.<sup>23</sup> Archaeological collections from the

TABLE 1. *Alexandria Potteries and Their Proprietors*

	<i>Chronology</i>	<i>Characteristics</i>
Piercy Pottery, Washington and Duke streets, northeast corner Site # 44AX87	1792–1809 <b>Henry Piercy</b> owns pottery.	Earthenware in the Philadelphia Germanic style, with orange to brown glazes, some with trailed or combed slip decoration.
	1795–96 Owns Piercy and Graham China and Glass Shop, 405 King Street	
	1796 Sells earthenware from Fairfax Street house.	Stoneware, gray salt-glazed with brown wash and reeded rims, attributed to Plum.
	1797 Forms partnership with <b>Lewis Plum</b> and nephew <b>John Piercy</b> .	
	1798 Forms partnership with <b>Thomas Fisher</b> ; they may also operate Fisher's pottery. Piercy probably no longer makes pottery himself.	No maker's marks.
	1799 Rents property to <b>Lewis Plum</b> and <b>Thomas Hewes</b> . Plum probably produces first Alexandria stoneware.	
	1800 Rents property to <b>James Hibberd</b> .	
	1805 Rents property to <b>Thomas Hewes</b> and <b>James Miller</b> .	
1809 Piercy dies, and pottery is offered for sale.		
1811 The property is divided into house lots.		
Fisher Pottery, Washington and Duke streets, southwest corner Site # 44AX80	1785 <b>James Lownes</b> purchases site. He may be a potter, or may build the pot-house for Fisher.	Earthenware and stoneware similar to that found at the Piercy site.
	1795–98 <b>Thomas Fisher</b> owns pottery.	
	1797 Forms partnership with <b>Thomas Hewes</b> and <b>James Miller</b> .	No maker's marks.
	1798 Forms partnership with <b>Henry Piercy</b> . This site is not mentioned in later documents, but may continue to be run along with the Piercy pottery across the street.	
Plum Pottery, Prince and St. Asaph Streets, northwest corner. Site not excavated	1800–13? <b>Lewis Plum</b> works with <b>James Miller</b> and an apprentice. He may work here until 1813, or may move earlier to the South Columbus Street pottery.	
	1803 Takes apprentice <b>John Swann</b> , working here or at South Columbus Street.	
Plum Pottery, Wolfe and South Columbus streets, southwest corner. Site # 44AX7	1801–21 <b>Lewis Plum</b> purchases property. He produces pottery here at least by 1814.	Earthenware and stoneware similar to that found at the Piercy site.
	1822–28 <b>Evans</b> and <b>Griggs</b> take over pottery after Plum's death.	
		Also earthenware flowerpots with combed lines and tooled pie-crust rim and flange. No maker's marks.
Reynolds Pottery, King and Fayette streets Site # 44AX86	1807 <b>William Reynolds</b>	Stoneware, gray salt-glazed stoneware, undecorated.
	1808 <b>John Reynolds</b> (?)	
		No maker's marks.



TABLE I. *continued*

	<i>Chronology</i>	<i>Characteristics</i>
<b>Wilkes Street Pottery</b> , 600 block Wilkes Street, north side Site # 44AX29	1812 (Jonathan Scofield, property owner, built kiln) 1813–25 <b>John Swann</b> (may work until 1833) 1820–41 <b>David Jarbour</b> , slave and then free black potter. Other free black workers at Wilkes Street after 1820: Mordecai Bennett, William Bennett, John Davis, Ben Jones, Luke Lee, Kitty Marshall, Alfred Merricks Michael Morris, Silvia Rogers Morris (freed by Hugh Smith), William Nickens, John Payne, John Simms Thomas Valentine (freed by Hugh Smith) 1825–51 <b>Hugh Smith</b> and son <b>Hugh Charles Smith</b> , owners and managers of pottery. Also owned China Shop, King Street. 1822–67 <b>Benedict C. Milburn</b> . Apprenticed with Swann beginning in 1822. Leased pottery from Smith in 1833. Purchased pottery in 1841 1834 <b>James Black</b> worked for Milburn 1867–73 <b>Stephen C. Milburn</b> (B.C. Milburn's son) 1867–73 Milburn's son <b>S. C. Milburn</b> takes over following his death 1871–76 Another son <b>W. Lewis Milburn</b> works at pottery and owns it from 1873.	Earthenware, utilitarian with brown glazed interior. Stoneware, gray salt glazed with iron wash (Swann), brushed cobalt (Swann, Smith, and Milburn periods), slip-trailed cobalt (Milburn), or undecorated (Milburn's sons). Stamped maker's marks
<b>James Black Pottery</b> , Wolfe and Patrick streets, northwest corner Site not excavated	1836 <b>James Black</b> works here for one year, after working at Wilkes Street.	Stoneware, gray salt-glazed with cobalt decoration. Stamped maker's mark.
<b>Tildon Easton Pottery</b> , King and Peyton streets, southeast corner Site # 44AX76	1841–43 <b>Tildon Easton</b> opens pottery in 1841 and files for bankruptcy two years later. Arrived in Alexandria by 1835, and may have apprenticed or been employed at Wilkes Street.	Earthenware, utilitarian with brown glazed interior, and flowerpots with spotty green glaze on exterior. Stoneware, gray salt-glazed with cobalt decoration. Stamped maker's mark.
<b>James Miller Pottery</b> , Unknown location Site not excavated	? <b>James Miller</b> manufactured syrup jars for an Alexandria sugar refinery which operated from 1804 to 1828. The 1820 Census lists him operating a pottery in the District of Columbia.	Earthenware syrup jars for sugar refinery, utilitarian with orange or brown glazed interior and heavy rounded rims. Stamped maker's mark.



5. Flower pot attributed to Lewis Plum, c. 1803–1821. Light orange clay with pie-crust rim and flange and incised lines, HOA 8", dia. at rim 7.5".

*From the Alexandria Archaeology collection.*

Piercy and Fisher potteries and from Plum's Wolfe Street pottery confirm the production of similar slip-decorated and plain glazed earthenware at all three sites. Because of the similarity of earthenware wasters found at these sites, the many examples of similar pottery found on other sites in Alexandria can only be classed as Alexandria-style earthenware, and cannot be directly attributed to Henry Piercy. Fragments of Alexandria-style earthenware, distinguishable from Philadelphia wares by the lighter clay, have been found in excavations throughout northern Virginia.<sup>24</sup>

The lead-glazed earthenware pottery found at the Plum pottery on Wolfe Street was of four types: deep basins with spiraling slip decoration, milk pans and pots with dark brown glazed interiors, thinner-walled vessels glazed on both interior and exterior, and unglazed earthenware flower pots with incised lines and pie-crust rims and flanges (fig. 5).<sup>25</sup> The flowerpots are unique to the Plum

site, but the other wares are nearly identical to those from the earlier Piercy and Fisher sites. Also found were a few sherds of gray salt-glazed stoneware jars and bottles, some with a brown iron-oxide wash, and under-fired sherds with a reddish-brown glaze. The appearance of the salt glaze on broken surfaces proves these sherds to be wasters.

#### LEWIS PLUM

The earliest stoneware manufactured in Alexandria was found at the sites of both the Piercy and Fisher potteries. As stated earlier, these are thought to have been manufactured by Lewis Plum, a former Piercy partner, who, with former Fisher partner Thomas Hewes, took over the business in 1798. The sherds include gray salt-glazed stoneware bottles with reeded necks (fig. 6) and jars with a brown iron-oxide wash. They are similar to ones found at Plum's later pottery at Wolfe and South Columbus streets.<sup>26</sup> Plum owned the Wolfe Street property by 1801 and worked there at least from 1814 until his death in 1821. John Swann, the first of the Wilkes Street stoneware potters, was indentured to Lewis Plum in 1803 and learned the art of stoneware production. Swann probably worked as



6. Stoneware from the Piercy pottery site, attributed to Lewis Plum, c. 1799. Gray salt-glazed stoneware bottle sherd with brown iron-oxide wash, at base 3.5". *From the Alexandria Archaeology collection.*

an apprentice with Plum and James Miller at another site, as yet unexcavated, on the northwest corner of Prince and St. Asaph streets.<sup>27</sup>

Most of the sherds recovered from these three sites are earthenware, with only a small quantity of stoneware wasters. Similar stoneware bottles and jars are rarely found among the domestic trash excavated from Alexandria households, while those produced later by Swann and Milburn are common. It would appear that Plum's major product remained earthenware, while his stoneware was limited to experimentation and small-scale production. Plum's apprentice, John Swann, was to become Alexandria's first major stoneware producer.<sup>28</sup> In 1822, when Evans and Griggs took over the pottery after Plum's death, they did not advertise stoneware, but only "Earthen-ware, such as pitchers, tea and coffee pots, &c."<sup>29</sup> Despite this advertisement for tea- and coffee-pots, sherds of one fluted teapot from the Fisher pottery site, with glaze on the broken edge, is the only example of press-molded wares from any of the Alexandria pottery sites. The main production of the Wolfe Street pottery, even under Evans and Griggs, was apparently still wheel-thrown earthenware.

Several factors may have contributed to the delay of more than ten years in full-scale stoneware production, including competition from low-priced imported goods. As British pottery became increasingly cheaper, Alexandria's potters would have suffered financially; they may have been unable to pay the higher costs of materials and fuel needed for stoneware production. Merchants, however, prospered as they supplied consumers who preferred imported Staffordshire pottery such as creamware and pearlware to the coarse local wares.

In the early nineteenth century, Alexandria's trade turned more toward the northern seaports of America, and to the West Indies. As Alexandria became a major sugar producer, at least one Alexandria potter, James Miller, found a niche producing industrial wares. Syrup jars bearing his stamp were found at the site of an Alexandria sugar refinery. Miller had been, at various times, a partner of Thomas Fisher, Lewis Plum, and Thomas Hewes.<sup>30</sup>

In the second decade of the nineteenth century, potters and other local manufacturers benefitted briefly from the Embargo Act of 1807 and the British blockade of the Chesapeake Bay in 1813, which reduced the amount of imported goods reaching the town. After the War of 1812 the supply of imported goods once again increased, but rising tariffs helped, at least for a few years, to renew the market for local pottery. This economic climate enabled John Swann to purchase the Wilkes Street pottery in 1813,<sup>31</sup> where he produced stoneware on a larger scale. The pottery, on the 600 block of Wilkes Street, was constructed in 1810, and probably leased by Swann from that time. The Wilkes Street pottery was first owned by Swann (1813–25), then by merchant Hugh Smith (1825–41), and finally by potter Benedict C. Milburn (1841–67) and his sons (1867–76). This was the largest and most successful pottery manufactory in Alexandria, and the one about which we have the most historical information. Many marked stoneware vessels manufactured at Wilkes Street survive in museums and private collections.

Stoneware was John Swann's main product, as can be seen from advertisements for his "Stone Ware Manufactory" printed in the *Alexandria Gazette*.<sup>32</sup> Waster sherds from undecorated earthenware milk pans were also found at the Wilkes Street pottery site, but in much smaller quantities than the stoneware. By this time, many of the traditional earthenware forms, such as bowls and pitchers, had been replaced with mass-produced products from England. A remark in the 1820 *Census of Manufacturers* by a Baltimore potter explains the decline of earthenware potteries in favor of stoneware. "Our Manufactures at present, are in a languishing condition," he wrote, "and the Earthenware in a peculiar manner, (as it is substituted by Queensware [of which there has been immense quantities forced into our country] more than Stoneware) as in the Stoneware they neither make Dishes or any Flat shaped Ware, Bowls or Porringers [*sic*] . . ." <sup>33</sup> While mass production and trade incentives flooded the market for dining vessels with these increasingly cheap

English wares, the sturdier stoneware continued to fulfill a need for utilitarian kitchen wares, particularly for food storage. In Alexandria, the earthenware tankards, bowls, and porringers made by Percy and his contemporaries were the forms replaced by queensware, or creamware. Earthenware chamber pots were also replaced largely by English creamware, and after 1830 by yellow ware from Baltimore and other parts of the United States,<sup>34</sup> with only a few stoneware chamber pots found in local excavations. Earthenware cooking vessels gave way to cast iron pots and to yellow ware "fire-proof" dishes. Stoneware production mostly met the need for food storage, with jars and jugs making up the bulk of the inventory.

Swann's earliest stoneware has a gray or brown surface, dipped to the shoulder in a brown iron-oxide wash which was allowed to drip down the surface of the pot. Bulbous jugs with reeded necks are the most common form, followed by bulbous pots or jars with lug handles (fig. 7).

In 1819 an advertisement announced that Swann "has been enabled lately to make a great improvement in his ware, although it has been at considerable expense and labor."<sup>35</sup> Around this time he began to produce a better, lighter-colored stoneware body with sparse cobalt blue decoration.<sup>36</sup> The considerable expense may have been for the importation of clay, as well as for the cobalt. An 1820 advertisement provided a price list, per dozen, for jugs, pots, pitchers, milk pans, churns, and chamber pots.<sup>37</sup> Examples of all of these forms were found at the pottery site and have been attributed to Swann, either stylistically or from maker's marks.<sup>38</sup>

Only four vessels stamped with "J SWANN ALEX<sup>A</sup>" are known from the Alexandria Archaeology collection. These include a decorated chamber pot, a lug-handled pot (or jar), a milkpan, and an unidentified sherd from the pottery site. A few other marked pieces are extant in private collections, including an undecorated dark gray jug with a reeded neck, and several cobalt-decorated ovoid pots. The simplest decoration is found on the milk pan, whose steep sides are marked with six evenly spaced pairs of leaves (fig. 8). These simple



7. Stoneware attributed to John Swann. The brown iron-oxide wash around the neck of the vessels is indicative of Swann's earliest stoneware, c. 1810–1820. From left to right: Jug with reeded neck and brown wash dripping down over gray salt-glaze, HOA 11", DOA 7"; pitcher with brown neck and blue cobalt flowers over gray salt-glaze, HOA 9", DOA 6"; pot with lug handles and brown wash at neck, over gray salt-glaze, HOA 6.5", DOA 8.5". *From the Alexandria Archaeology collection.*

8. Stoneware marked

"J SWANN ALEX<sup>A</sup>." The blue cobalt decoration is indicative of Swann's later stoneware, c. 1820–1825.

From left to right: Milkpan, HOA 4.5", dia. at rim 8.25"; pot with lug handles, HOA 13", DOA 10"; chamber pot, HOA 6.5", diameter at rim 8.5". *From the Alexandria Archaeology collection.*



pairs of leaves are found again arranged as a vine around the shoulder or rim of pots (fig. 8), and flanking the lip of a pitcher. Another jar has a vine with small three-petaled tulips, a variation of a common stoneware motif<sup>39</sup> which is found throughout the years of the Wilkes Street pottery. One marked pot, from a private collection,<sup>40</sup> has a triangular arrangement of scalloped lines also seen on earthenware from Peter Bell of Winchester, variously identified as stylized grapes, seed pods,<sup>41</sup> or fish scales.<sup>42</sup> This pattern also appears on an unmarked milkpan, probably from the Shenandoah Valley, in the collection of the Alexandria Archaeology Museum. The chamber pot has a more complex pattern of vines, still made up primarily of small pairs of leaves with no apparent stem (fig. 8). The arrangement of elements on this pot is similar to that seen on Smith and Milburn jars.

One marked Swann pot is decorated with a stylized flower on a



leafy stem, the flower encircling the potter's stamp (fig. 9). This flower marks the beginnings of a stylistic motif used for at least thirty years, through the Smith and Milburn periods. This simple round flower, usually drawn on a leafy stem with additional foliage branching out on either side, is the hallmark of the Alexandria potters. It is seen again and again on a variety of vessel forms and in a variety of painting styles (see fig. 10). The flower is most often drawn as a plain circle, but is sometimes given petals. On some of the Milburn pots a tulip is similarly placed. A variation on this design, with a different placement of the foliage, was used by R. Butt in Washington, D.C., around 1834 and 1843.<sup>43</sup>

Two unmarked pitchers in the Alexandria Archaeology collection may also be examples of Swann's stoneware. Both have cobalt decoration in a style similar to that seen on the marked pieces, and one has brown wash on the neck, as seen on Swann's earlier wares. While one pitcher exhibits a simple floral motif (fig. 7), the other shows a face in profile. Only one other Alexandria pot, also unmarked, has a representative motif other than flowers and foliage. This straight-sided jar, depicting a ship on one side and a leafless tree on the other,



9. Mark from a stoneware jug, "J SWANN ALEX", showing a floral motif typical of Alexandria stoneware through the Swann, Smith and Milburn periods. HOA 8.75", DOA 8". *Private collection; photograph courtesy of Alexandria Archaeology.*



10. Stoneware from the Wilkes Street pottery marked with the Smith Company name. From left to right: Jar marked "H C SMITH ALEX'," made after retrocession of Alexandria to Virginia during B. C. Milburn's ownership, c. 1846-1851, HOA 9.5", DOA 7"; cake pot with the forward-facing flower typical of the Wilkes Street pottery, marked "H SMITH & CO.," c. 1825-1831, HOA 5.5", DOA 9.5"; jar marked "H SMITH & CO.," ca. 1825-1831, HOA 10.5", DOA 6". *From the Alexandria Archaeology collection.*

is attributed to B. C. Milburn based on its shape and artistic style. Swann's style of decoration may have been influenced primarily by Baltimore potters such as Thomas and Joel Morgan and Henry C. Remmey. While Piercy's advertisements compared the quality of his wares with those of Philadelphia, Swann's compared the price of his wares with those of his major competitors from Baltimore.<sup>44</sup>

The 1820 *Census of Manufacturers* listed Swann as employing six men and two boys, including three slaves and two apprentices. The manufactory included a potting house with four wheels and two kilns, a warehouse, and a mill house. With a \$6,000 capital investment and \$2,000 expenses for materials and wages in that year, the pottery produced stoneware with a market value of \$8,000.

This was, however, a difficult time for many Alexandrians. Foreclosures, bankruptcies, and auctions of businesses were commonplace starting in 1817, and the Panic of 1819 deepened the depression. By the mid-1820s Alexandria's growth had been curtailed, with Baltimore and Richmond increasingly drawing off trade. Many Alexandrians blamed the town's status as part of the Federal City for its hardships. In part because of her surrender to the British in the War of 1812, Alexandria suffered in this arrangement, coming under strict Federal control at the same time that most development was taking place across the river in Washington City.

Although an accomplished potter, Swann was among those plagued by financial problems. In 1821 he mortgaged his property, receiving a loan of \$500 from Hugh Smith, a King Street china merchant and wholesale buyer of Swann's pots. A contract was signed between Smith and Swann for the purchase of all stoneware that would be manufactured during the next two years. Alexandria deed books record Swann's failure to pay back the loan or to deliver stoneware according to the contract.<sup>45</sup> In 1822 Swann notified the public that he had disposed of his stoneware manufactory and all his stock to Hugh Smith & Co., which had continued the business on a large scale. He asked his customers to patronize the new owner.<sup>46</sup> However, it was not until 1825 that Hugh Smith & Co. foreclosed

on the mortgage. The property was sold at auction and purchased by the mortgage holder.<sup>17</sup> At this time Hugh Smith retired from his retail business, which was left to the management of his son, and took over management of the pottery. Swann may have remained an employee, at least sporadically, until 1830, but Smith's business acumen had a major influence on the pottery. The infusion of capital from the new owner, and his active involvement in the business, enabled the pottery to grow. It directly supplied the Smith family retail business with a large supply of stoneware marked with the company name, and advertised widely throughout the region.

#### THE HUGH SMITH PERIOD

During the period of Smith's ownership of the pottery in the 1830s, Alexandria began to industrialize on a small scale, manufacturing steam engines and machinery. Hugh Smith's business benefited from the general economic growth, although he never industrialized the pottery.

The pottery from the Smith period is more exuberantly decorated, exhibiting more fully developed floral designs. While the designs are still forward-facing, the back of the pot carries more decoration than Swann's earlier works, often in the form of leaves in groups of three. Most vessels have a version of the typical round Alexandria flower, centrally placed above a stem with flanking branches (fig. 10). Others are decorated with tulips (fig. 10) or are encircled by elaborate trailing vines, usually springing from a single flower (fig. 10).

Working at the pottery in Hugh Smith's employ was potter Benedict C. Milburn. Milburn came to Alexandria from St. Mary's County, Maryland, in 1822, at the age of seventeen.<sup>18</sup> The two Alexandria potteries in operation at that time were the Swann-Smith pottery on Wilkes Street and the Wolfe Street pottery of Evans and Griggs, successors to Lewis Plum. No record of where Milburn worked during these early years has been found, but he was probably working at Wilkes Street by 1831, when he was recorded as renting

John Swann's former house. In 1833 he apparently took over management of the pottery,<sup>49</sup> leasing it from Smith before purchasing it in 1841.<sup>50</sup>

A number of journeymen potters, apprentices, slaves, and indentured servants worked at the Wilkes Street pottery through the years. James Black, a potter who worked for Milburn in 1834, went on to open his own pottery in Alexandria in 1836, but worked there for just one year.<sup>51</sup> Several of the potters were free blacks, including David Jarbour, also of St. Mary's County, who worked at the pottery between 1826 and 1840. A jar in the MESDA collection is signed on the bottom in script, "1830 Alex<sup>d</sup> Maid [*sic*] by D. Jarbour." At twenty-eight inches in height, this is one of the largest pots known from the Wilkes Street pottery and one of only a few to be signed.<sup>52</sup> The style of painting, with rather long, broad brush strokes, is similar to that seen on some other pots of the Smith period, and the motif, a forward-facing design of tulips and foliage, is typical of the Wilkes Street pottery under Swann, Smith, and Milburn (fig. 11).

Suzita Myers made a study of the Smith company names used in newspaper advertisements to develop a chronology for the pottery stamps used during the Smith period. She found that the "HUGH SMITH & CO" name, though rarely seen on pottery, was used by 1822 until 1831, and therefore indicates pottery made before Milburn took over operations at Wilkes Street. "H SMITH & CO" was used at the same time, but also from 1841 to 1851, when Milburn owned the pottery. "H C SMITH"



11. Stoneware pot made in 1830 by David Jarbour, an African-American potter who worked at the Wilkes Street pottery between 1826 and 1841. Signed on the bottom, in script, "1830 Alex<sup>d</sup> Maid by D. Jarbour." HOA 27<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>"; DOA 11<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>". MESDA ACC. 2964 m.

was used from 1831 until 1851, under Milburn. This mark is impressed on pottery with the place name "ALEX<sup>A</sup> DC" until retrocession in 1846 (when Alexandria was returned to the state of Virginia), and with "ALEX<sup>A</sup>" alone from 1846 to 1851. Thus, some of the pottery marked with the Smith company name was made for their retail business after Milburn purchased the manufactory. The presence of Jarbour and other journeymen potters also clouds the issue of attribution. Milburn also manufactured pots for merchants James P. Smith from 1851 to 1854<sup>53</sup> and E. J. Miller from 1865 to 1876, and their marks appear on pot sherds found at the Wilkes Street site.<sup>54</sup>

The predominant Smith company marks, "H SMITH & CO" (probably 1825 to 1831), "H C SMITH ALEX<sup>A</sup> DC" (1831 to 1846), "H C SMITH ALEX<sup>A</sup>" (1846 to 1851), and Milburn's own marks, are each found on both broad-shouldered and cylindrical jars, so the shape alone offers little help with attribution. Similarly, styles of decoration cannot be clearly linked with one mark or time period during Smith's tenure.

Pottery forms identified from the wasters at the Wilkes Street site include jugs, jars, pitchers, milk pans, butter or cake pots, chamber pots, and churns (in descending order of quantity). Other stoneware forms known from collections (both museum and private) are water coolers, spittoons, and banks.

#### B. C. MILBURN

After acquiring the pottery in 1841, Milburn continued to manufacture both earthenware and stoneware, with stoneware the main product of the pottery. In addition to decorated stoneware jars, pans, water coolers, and churns, he advertised the sale of flower pots, stove pipe collars, and chimney pots. These latter forms were earthenware.

While some of Milburn's pottery is stamped with the marks of merchants Smith and Miller, much of his production after 1841 bears



12. Stoneware with slip-trailed cobalt decoration, stamped "B C MILBURN ALEX<sup>A</sup>," c. 1846–1861. From left to right: Jar, HOA 15", DOA 9.5"; milk pan, HOA 4", diameter at rim 9"; pitcher, HOA 15" (estimated), DOA 8". *From the Alexandria Archaeology collection.*

his own mark. From 1841 to 1846, before Alexandria's retrocession to Virginia, his stamp reads "B. C. MILBURN ALEX<sup>A</sup> D.C." Later wares use his name alone or with "ALEX<sup>A</sup>."

The decorated stoneware marked with Milburn's name exhibits the most elaborate designs of any of the Alexandria potters, with exuberant, forward-facing floral designs. In addition to brushed cobalt decoration similar to that from the years of Smith's ownership, Milburn introduced the technique of slip-trailed cobalt, using a slip cup to create a narrower, raised line (fig. 12). Slip trailing appears occasionally on other Virginia stoneware, but unlike Milburn's wares, it is combined with brushed cobalt on the same vessel.<sup>55</sup>

The Alexandria Archaeology collection includes marked Milburn milkpans with the same round flower used by Swann. Tulips are seen more commonly, in both brushed and slip-trailed cobalt. Both techniques are used to create the two most typical Alexandria designs: forward-facing flowers with foliage, and vines and flowers encircling the pot. On larger pots the patterns become more elaborate, with larger numbers of flowers and branches. Wavy lines, scalloped lines, chains, or waves may encircle the neck or otherwise embellish the floral and foliate designs.

An interesting jar and churn, in a private collection,<sup>56</sup> each has a scalloped line below its rim, typical of many Milburn pieces. Below this, on the shoulder, is a pattern of graduated leaves, each group ending in a large leaf to form a C-shaped branch, interspersed with tulips. This distinctive leaf pattern is characteristic of Solomon Bell and others in the Shenandoah Valley.<sup>57</sup> While Milburn provided for most of Alexandria's needs, Shenandoah Valley stoneware has been found in excavations in the city. Wares from Baltimore, and probably from the District of Columbia, were also used and may have influenced the Alexandria potters. Milburn's stoneware was sold over a wide area, including the Shenandoah Valley, and the exchange of ideas and styles was no doubt two-way.

#### TILDON EASTON

There had been no local competition with the Wilkes Street pottery since the former Plum pottery closed in 1828. In 1841, however, the same year that Milburn purchased the Wilkes Street pottery, Tildon Easton advertised his "new stone and earthen ware manufactory" on Peyton Street.<sup>58</sup> Easton competed unsuccessfully with Milburn's established business, however, and he filed for bankruptcy after less than two years.<sup>59</sup> Easton's wares are known only from the wasters found at the kiln site.

All that remained of the Easton's pottery kiln was its base, including the lowest four courses of brick set in mortar. The upper portion and most of the rubble from the kiln's destruction were removed



during land-filling operations in the twentieth century. The eight-sided kiln measured twelve feet in diameter. Nearby postholes may indicate the type of shed typically built to protect the kiln from the elements.

The Easton kiln had one flue channel encircling the brick floor and another cutting across the floor from the firebox. Large flat tiles such as those found in the waster dump would have bridged the flue channels. The firebox, opening directly into the flue channel at the level of the firing chamber door, indicates an updraft kiln with a central hole or chimney for the escape of air and fumes.<sup>60</sup> The uneven firing produced by this type of kiln is evident from the appearance of many of the wasters found at the site. Easton's use of an updraft kiln, a type commonly used for earthenware, reflects the low technology level needed for a small-scale stoneware manufactory. More sophisticated down-draft kilns were preferred for salt-glazing, because the temperature was more easily controlled and the tall, remote chimney disposed of the chlorine-gas byproducts at a greater height.<sup>61</sup>

A nearly complete cobalt-decorated jar was found broken in one of the flues, providing proof that salt-glazed stoneware was produced in the last firing of this kiln. The gases from the salt had not reached the sherds in the flue, but had glazed a rim sherd from the same pot that was found in the nearby waster pile (fig. 13).

A total of 879 pieces of kiln furniture, all burnt to the reddish color of the surrounding ash, were also found in the flues, with another 663 pieces found above the kiln floor. These fire bars, stilts, jar saggers, and other shapes of clay would have supported the stacked pottery during the final firing of the kiln. This amount of kiln furniture would have supported several hundred pieces of stoneware. The flues were completely filled with artifacts and ash, indicating that they had not been cleaned out after the last firing, although the fired vessels had been removed from the kiln. This may indicate that the kiln was damaged in the last firing, and that Easton did not plan to use it again.

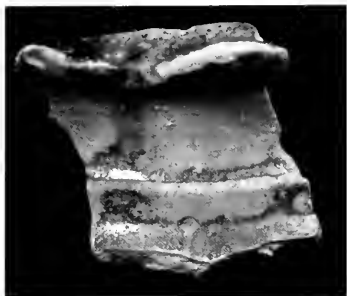
After the fired pottery was unloaded from a kiln, the kiln furni-

13. Stoneware churn from the Tildon Easton Pottery site. These sherds, in an unglazed biscuit state, were recovered from the flue channel of the kiln. The missing rim sherd, with a salt glaze, was found in the waster pile. HOA 8", DOA 6". *From the Alexandria Archaeology collection.*



ture and broken sherds remaining at the bottom of the kiln were normally shoveled out to clear the kiln for re-use. Waster piles therefore surrounded the kilns on all pottery manufacturing sites, providing archaeological evidence of the wares produced. Of the 5,220 earthenware and stoneware sherds recovered from a portion of the Easton waster pile, stoneware comprised a little more than half. A total of 677 vessels were identified from these stoneware and earthenware sherds, and they have been analyzed and compared with the pottery from the Wilkes Street site.

Easton's earthenware is not easily distinguished from that of the Wilkes Street and earlier potters, apart from the distinctive flanged, green-glazed flowerpots.<sup>62</sup> These are reminiscent of much earlier English forms and glazes (fig. 14). Easton did, however, introduce some new stoneware vessel forms to Alexandria, producing ink bottles (fig. 15), flasks (fig. 16), and flower pots (fig. 17). The small, straight-sided ink bottles, stamped "TILDON EASTON," are the



14. Earthenware flowerpot sherd from the Tildon Easton pottery site. These pots, with a pie-crust rim and flange, have a spotty green glaze on the interior, with fewer areas of glaze on the exterior. *From the Alexandria Archaeology collection.*



15. Stoneware ink bottle from the Tildon Easton pottery site. Gray salt-glazed with a shiny greenish-brown glaze on interior, stamped "TILDON EASTON." HOA 6" (estimated), dia. at base 3.5". A similar bottle was found with an orange body and salt-glaze, with a brown glazed interior. *From the Alexandria Archaeology collection.*



16. Stoneware flask from the Tildon Easton pottery site. Brown salt-glazed with a buff-colored body, HOA 9" (estimated), WOA 5". *From the Alexandria Archaeology collection.*

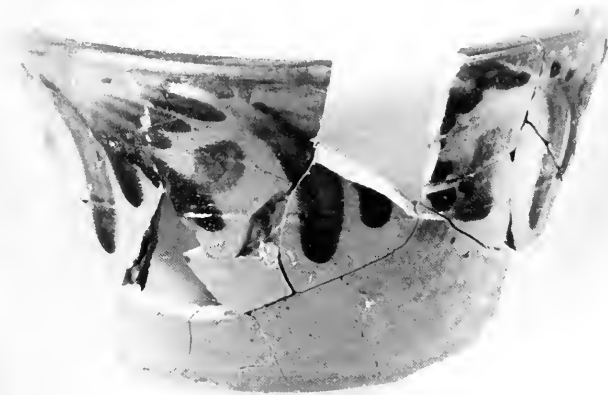


17. Sherds from a Stoneware flower pot from the Tildon Easton pottery site. Gray salt-glazed with brushed cobalt design, HOA 3" (estimated), diameter at rim 2.5". *From the Alexandria Archaeology collection.*

only known Alexandria stoneware vessels with an interior slip or glaze. The shiny, distinctive olive-green interior surface may have been produced by combining the common brown Albany slip and a clay from Seneca Falls, New York. In addition to producing a brighter-colored glaze, this mixture apparently covered more evenly than the Albany slip.<sup>63</sup> At least five of these bottles have been identified, including two gray and two orange salt-glazed jars and one buff-colored waster in a bisque state. A number of orange and brown glazed bottles and pocket flasks with buff-colored bodies also appear to be lighter in color and finer in texture than Easton's gray, cobalt-decorated milk pans and jars. The gray body and glaze are the result of the reducing atmosphere of the stoneware kiln, which draws oxygen from the clay. The orange body and glaze is the result of incomplete firing of the pottery in an oxidizing atmosphere. This may have been accidental, since these are wasters, but could have been a deliberate attempt to produce a light-colored ware. More than two hundred cow phalanges, thought to come from a nearby tannery, were found in the waster pile. The presence of these foot bones may indicate that an attempt was made to use bone ash to lighten the body color.<sup>64</sup> Only three hundred sherds of the light buff-colored ware were found at the site, so this may have been an experimental endeavor.

Bottles from Easton's pottery are straight-sided, with strap handles springing from the shoulder and long, straight necks. The straight double rims imitate those of glass bottles formed with the lipping tool after 1840, and were also used by Milburn on broad, squat jugs. Like those of the other Alexandria potters, Easton's bottles and jugs are not decorated.

Easton's stoneware milkpans, ranging in size from eight to fifteen inches in diameter, have squared rims, pouring spouts, and lug handles. They are similar in form to those produced by Smith and Milburn, but with straighter sides. His jars are straight-sided with curved shoulders and a squared rim, with lug handles on some vessels. The shape is similar to some from the Wilkes Street pottery.



18. Stoneware milk pan from the Tildon Easton pottery site. Gray salt-glazed with brushed cobalt design. HOA 4.5", diameter at rim 9". *From the Alexandria Archaeology collection.*

However, the simple squared rims contrast with the rounded ones from the Swann and Smith periods and the more complex rim forms used by Milburn.

The gray salt-glazed milk pans and jars Easton produced are decorated with brushed cobalt vines and flowers, arranged in a wavy horizontal band around the upper portion of the vessel. All of the known vessels have a similar arrangement of decorative elements, although the execution varies from careful brush strokes to quick slashes, indicating the work of more than one decorator. The closest Alexandria parallel for Easton's cobalt-decorated stoneware is that produced by Milburn for H. C. Smith in the 1830s. Easton lived in Alexandria during this period and could have been working with Milburn. Unlike the forward-facing designs most common at Wilkes Street, however, Easton's designs appear the same from all sides (fig. 18).

Some of Easton's decorative patterns are nearly identical to those excavated from a pottery site in Washington, D.C., attributed to

Enoch Burnett (1843–62). Burnett apprenticed in Baltimore beginning in 1813. He worked with Henry Remmey in Philadelphia from 1827 to 1831, before returning to Baltimore for the period 1831 to 1843.<sup>65</sup> The similarity of Easton's works to Burnett's is most likely due to the influence of Baltimore stoneware sold in Alexandria, rather than from any direct working relationship.

Easton's innovations in vessel form and his possible experimentation with lighter colored wares show an attempt to vary his production from that of his competitor, to find his own niche in the local market. However, his enterprise was short-lived, due at least in part to the intense competition from Milburn, who had an established market for his wares. After Easton's bankruptcy, Milburn's pottery remained the only one in Alexandria.

An article printed in the *Alexandria Gazette* in 1855 provides a fascinating description of how Milburn's stoneware was manufactured, and suggests that the public visit the manufactory. It reads as follows:

#### *Alexandria Pottery*

Those who have never witnessed the operations of shaping and finishing Earthenware will be gratified by a visit to the manufactory of Mr. Milburn, on Wilkes Street, of this city. The material employed is a species of bluish white clay, found in various parts of the country, and composed of such proportions of alumina and other ingredients as to make it very tenacious and plastic when moistened. The clay used at Mr. Milburn's factory is brought from the vicinity of Baltimore City. After the clay is thoroughly kneaded and prepared, a certain portion, according to the size of the vessel to be made, is placed upon a circular board fixed horizontally and connected with a treadle by which a rotary motion is given to it. While the clay is revolving in common with the board on which it lies, the operator shapes it with his hands, into whatever vessel it is designed to make. The judgment shown in choosing just the proper quantity for the vessel designed, and the skill and regularity with which it is brought to the shape and size desired, by the aid of machinery so simple, excite the admiration of the beholder. The vessels thus prepared are dried a while in the sun; after which they are placed in the kiln where the processes of burning and glazing complete the work.<sup>66</sup>

While the stoneware potters may have utilized local clays during some years of operation, the article shows that, at least in 1855, Milburn was bringing clay from Baltimore. The color of the stoneware body on Milburn's decorated wares ranges from a pure gray to a brownish gray, darker than that seen on some of Swann's decorated wares. This article does not discuss the step of decorating, implying that Milburn's wares were already no longer regularly decorated by 1855.

By this time, the production of yellow ware, glass, and tin in more industrialized parts of the country provided homemakers with alternatives to the use of the heavy old-fashioned stoneware. In particular, the introduction of the Mason's canning jar in 1858 replaced consumer demand for small stoneware jars. With less demand for stoneware products, Milburn stepped up production of chimney pots and unglazed earthenware flowerpots, supplying a local seed warehouse.<sup>67</sup>

Alexandria's level of industrialization continued to be minor compared to that of Baltimore and other cities that became early centers of rail transportation. The railroads finally arrived in Alexandria in 1851, five years after retrocession, along with a new coal wharf at the Alexandria Canal, a foundry to build locomotives and other industry.<sup>68</sup> This was the height of Milburn's success at the Wilkes Street pottery. However, while Baltimore's potters industrialized in the mid-nineteenth century, producing large quantities of molded yellow ware and Rockingham wares, Milburn continued to produce wheel-thrown wares on a much smaller scale.

The railroad did not bring prosperity for long. The invasion of federal troops, which occupied Alexandria in the Civil War, had devastated Alexandria's economy.<sup>69</sup> Eventually great warehouses were built to supply the Army of the Potomac, but domestic trade, including the manufacture of pottery, was stifled.

Milburn's business declined sharply in the 1860s, due in part to the changing technology, but also due to economic conditions during and after the Civil War. During the war, Milburn may have supplied the Union troops occupying the town, but the pottery appears

to have shut down during the war years, reopening on a reduced scale in 1866.<sup>70</sup> Not until the next year, when the elder Milburn passed away, did the town begin to regain its trade and commerce.<sup>71</sup>

#### MILBURN'S SONS

B. C. Milburn died in 1867 at the age of sixty-two, and the business was continued by his thirty-four-year-old son, S. C. Milburn.<sup>72</sup> Another son, W. Lewis Milburn, worked at the pottery from 1871, and managed it starting in 1873. Just a few pieces of stoneware marked with S. C. Milburn's name are decorated with brushed cobalt. Some of these may have been made when he was a young man working at his father's pottery. All known examples of W. Lewis Milburn's pottery are plain. In 1874, the pottery was producing stoneware jugs, pots, pans, and churns, as listed in a lien filed by an employee.<sup>73</sup> Jugs were a major product in the later years, formed in a cylindrical shape with a sloping lip resembling the tooled lip of glass bottles. Most of the pots produced in the 1860s and 1870s were no longer decorated, and the long tradition of Alexandria stoneware design was coming to an end.

By 1873, when W. Lewis Milburn took over control of the pottery from his brother, the town's economy was continuing to improve. Streetcars were being built, the town was lighted with gas and supplied with water, and steam cars and ferries connected the town with Washington. By 1876, reconstruction had ended and Alexandria's economic recovery was complete. In this same year, however, the Wilkes Street pottery closed its doors, finally unable to compete with the lower prices of both industrial goods and stoneware from the much larger Baltimore and Pennsylvania stoneware potteries. Sherds of stoneware from the James Hamilton Company in Greensboro, Pennsylvania, have been found in excavation, bearing stencilled advertisements for Alexandria merchant E. J. Miller. Many examples of this stoneware, with an Albany slip on the interior and elaborate stencilled designs, can also be found in private collections.



A year after the Wilkes Street pottery closed, the neighboring Smoot Tannery built a bark shed on the property, marking the end of Alexandria's eighty-four-year-old pottery industry.

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#### NOTES

1. On June 10, 1841 the following notice appeared in the *Alexandria Gazette*: "NEW STONEWARE AND EARTHEN WARE MANUFACTORY. The Subscriber respectfully informs the public, that he has commenced the above business on Peyton Street, between King and Prince Streets, Alexandria, D.C., where he has on hand, and is constantly manufacturing, STONE AND EARTHEN WARE, of every description, and of the best quality, which will be sold on the most accommodating terms. Country merchants and others, would do well by calling. TILDON EASTON."

2. Excavations at the Tildon Easton site (44AX76) were carried out by Alexandria Archaeology, a division of the Office of Historic Alexandria, City of Alexandria, Virginia. Initial excavations in October 1983, at 1412 King Street, were directed by J. N. Leith Smith. Subsequent excavations in November 1984, at 1410 King Street, were directed by the author, who also directed the laboratory analysis.

3. Test excavations on the sites of the Piercy (44AX87) and Fisher (44AX80) potteries were conducted in 1968–1969 by Richard J. Muzzole, Museum Specialist in the Department of Cultural History of the National Museum of History and Technology (now the National Museum of American History), Smithsonian Institution, under the direction of C. Malcolm Watkins. Wasters recovered from these sites are in the collections of the Alexandria Archaeology Museum and the Department of Ceramics and Glass at the National Museum of American History. The City of Alexandria investigated the Plum Pottery site on Wolfe Street (44AX7) in 1975, 1979 and 1983, with back-hoe trenches and surface collection (see note 21).

4. Rescue excavations at the Wilkes Street pottery (44AX29) were conducted in 1977 by Alain C. Outlaw, for the Virginia Research Center for Archaeology. The excavation has been described briefly in Dennis J. Pogue, "An Analysis of Wares Salvaged from the Swan [*sic*]-Smith-Milburn Pottery Site (44AX29), Alexandria, Virginia," *Archaeological Society of Virginia Quarterly Bulletin*, 34:3 (March 1980), 149; and in Suzita Cecil Myers, *Alexandria Salt-Glazed Stoneware: A Study in Material Culture 1813–1876*, M.A. Thesis, University of Maryland (1982), 54–70.

5. While this was the first *in situ* kiln structure found, excavations at the Wilkes Street site had uncovered several sections of articulated salt-glazed brick from a pottery kiln, including a portion of an interior structural arch, disturbed by demolition. Pogue, "An Analysis of Wares," 149.

6. Barbara H. Magid, *Tradition and Innovation at a Nineteenth-Century Pottery*. Alexandria

Archaeology Publications, number 5. Presented at the Society for Historical Archaeology annual meeting, Baltimore, 1989.

7. Documentary research on Alexandria's potters was conducted by Suzita Myers, Robin Ruffner, Jack Pickens, and, under the auspices of the Smithsonian Institution, Malcolm Watkins, Richard Muzzrole and Betty Walters. Research notes and manuscripts are on file at Alexandria Archaeology. Some excavated wasters from the Piercy pottery site are curated by the Department of Ceramics and Glass, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution. Additional material from this site, and all excavated material from the other Alexandria pottery sites, is owned and curated by Alexandria Archaeology.

8. From the standard language of indentures, as used in the 1803 indenture of John Swann to potter Lewis Plum, in the *Alexandria Orphan Court Records*, 1801-1830.

9. Piercy's first advertisement in *The Virginia Gazette and Alexandria Advertiser* (later the *Alexandria Gazette*), on November 1, 1792, reads as follows: "EARTHEN WARE MANUFACTORY. The subscriber has lately, at a very considerable expense erected a MANUFACTORY of EARTHEN WARE in the Town which he now carries on, on a very extensive plan, where Merchants and others may be supplied at the shortest notice, and their orders carefully executed. He flatters himself that the quality of his wares is, and will constantly be, equal to any work in Philadelphia or elsewhere, and that his assiduity to please, and the goodness of his ware, will ensure him the patronage of all those who wish to encourage home manufactures. He has also for sale at his house, the upper end, Prince Street, a large assortment of CHINA, QUEEN'S WARE and GLASS."

10. The history of Henry Piercy is recounted in John K. Pickens, "Captain Henry Piercy," 1-5, unpublished manuscript 1975-1979 in the files of Alexandria Archaeology and in the Pickens Papers (box 57), Alexandria Library, Lloyd House.

11. In 1974, Richard Muzzrole and John K. Pickens dug a test pit and probed in a ten-block construction site in the vicinity of Christian Piercy's pottery in Philadelphia. While they did not locate the waster piles, they uncovered a cache of pottery thought to have been from a shop. A box of earthenware thought to be of Piercy's manufacture is in the collection of the Alexandria Archaeology Museum. A discussion of this investigation is provided in Pickens, *Captain Henry Piercy*, 8.

12. Donald K. Shomette, "Maritime Alexandria: an Evaluation of Submerged Cultural Resource Potentials at Alexandria, Virginia," unpublished report, 1985, 67-69. Report on file at Alexandria Archaeology.

13. T. Michael Miller, ed. *Pen Portraits of Alexandria, Virginia, 1739-1900*, (Bowie, Md., Heritage Books, 1987), 60.

14. Miller, *Pen Portraits*, 81, quoting *The Alexandria Gazette Commercial & Political* of July 27, 1816.

15. *Black's Laws of Virginia*, ch. 48, as discussed in Pickens, *Captain Henry Piercy*, 5.

16. Excavated eighteenth-century utilitarian wares from Alexandria include Staffordshire slipware, Buckley ware, North Devon gravel-tempered ware, agate ware, and brown salt-glazed stoneware from England, Iberian storage jars, German stonewares, and Philadelphia redware. The Philadelphia redwares are similar in style to those made in Alexandria in the 1790s, but with a heavier, darker red clay. A survey of advertisements in the *Alexandria Gazette* from its inception in 1784 through the 1790s shows that Alexandria merchants were selling Philadelphia pottery, and comparing Alexandria products to these wares.

17. *The Virginia Gazette and Alexandria Advertiser*, November 1, 1792.

18. The following article from the *Pennsylvania Mercury*, February 4, 1785, indicates the level of understanding of the ill effects of lead-glazed earthenware in the late eighteenth century:

"The best of Lead-glazing is esteemed unwholesome, by observing people. The Mischievous effects of it fall chiefly on the country people, and the poor everywhere. Even when it is firm enough, so as not to scale off, it is yet imperceptibly eaten away by every acid matter; and mixing with the drinks and meats of the people, become a slow but sure poison, chiefly affecting the nerves, that enfeeble the constitution, and produce paleness, tremors, gripes, palsies, &c, sometimes to whole families." Reprinted in Harold F. Guiland, *Early American Folk Pottery* (Philadelphia: Chilton Book Company, 1979), 38.

The effects fell chiefly on the poor, because lead-glazed earthenware was less expensive than stoneware. Earthenware was also more accessible to country dwellers, since it was produced at many small local potteries which operated part-time to serve the local community. Stoneware was expensive to transport because of its heavy weight. The article goes on to say that the manufacture of stoneware should be encouraged by the Legislature.

19. A brick-lined privy shaft (designated 4KSW-15, site 44AX91) behind Piercy and Graham's shop, which stood at 406 King Street from 1795 to 1796, was excavated by Richard Muzzrole in 1974. The shaft, five feet in diameter and five feet deep, was "almost solidly filled by Piercy's pottery, apparently a year's worth of daily breakage in the store," according to John K. Pickens in his manuscript "Early American Craftsmen: Captain Henry Piercy, Patriot and Master Potter," 1. The pottery may instead have been discarded after the store closed, as some of the pots contained paint and plaster. In either case, the large quantity of Piercy's earthenware clearly associates the assemblage with the short period of the ship's existence. Other artifacts from the privy also point to a date of deposition around this time period. The Alexandria Archaeology Museum has a collection of eighty-one vessels of Piercy's manufacture that were restored from sherds found in this feature. These were found along with wasters and kiln furniture. English pearlware and creamware, Chinese porcelain, bottle glass, lead bale seals, and other debris from the shop were also recovered.

20. *The Columbia Mirror and Alexandria Gazette* (later the *Alexandria Gazette*), June 23, 1795.

21. "A brick house in King Street now occupied by Captain Pearcy [*sic*]" was offered for rent as of April 1, 1796, in *The Columbia Mirror and Alexandria Gazette*, March 3, 1796.

22. Piercy's property at 127 South Fairfax Street, consisting of "A Store and Cellar, and, if required, a Counting Room," was offered for rent in *The Columbia Mirror and Alexandria Gazette*, June 7, 1796. A contractor building a shop on that site in 1974 uncovered "a half barrel of large Piercy sherds in one pile which apparently had been a yard clean up sometime after 1800." Pickens, *Early Alexandria Craftsmen* 1: 2.

23. A discussion of the history of these potters can be found in Pickens, "Captain Henry Piercy," and also in "The Pots and Potteries of Alexandria, Virginia: 1792-1806," unpublished manuscript, C. Malcolm Watkins, in the files of Alexandria Archaeology.

24. The author has examined Alexandria earthenware and stoneware from a number of northern Virginia sites, including Mount Vernon, Manassas, Earp's Ordinary in Fairfax City, and sites throughout Fairfax County.

25. Flowerpot waster sherds from the Plum site on Wolfe and South Columbus streets (44AX7), in operation from 1801 to 1828, exhibit the pie-crust rim and flange and combed decoration illustrated in figure 5. The pie-crust rim on these pots is not pinched, but is made by impressing a tool in the rim and flange. The pots are encircled with panels which are separated by lines made with a four- or six-tooth comb. Some sherds have wavy lines filling the panel, made with the same instrument. Similar sherds have been found on numerous residential sites in Alexandria dating from the early nineteenth century. Restored pots in the Alexandria Archaeology collection include a 7" pot with three panels of wavy lines made with a six-tooth comb

(44AXI-RD65), an 8" pot with two panels of wavy lines made with a four-tooth comb (44AX93-CB3-67.1036), a 10" pot with four plain panels separated by lines made with a four-tooth comb (44AX95-3KSW4-D2), each with the double pie-crust rim. Another 10" pot has two panels of wavy lines, made with a single-toothed tool (44AX95-3KSW8-A2). The double rim has the same profile as the other Plum pots, but without the indentations which give the pie-crust appearance. No definite attribution has been made for other pots in the collection with plain, single rounded rims, although some, with panels of single wavy lines, may also be products of the Plum pottery.

26. A twenty-foot trench was excavated by the City of Alexandria with a backhoe in 1975, uncovering several pieces of kiln flooring and ceramic artifacts at six to seven feet below grade. Pickens, "Early Alexandria Craftsmen," 2:3. The site was trenched again in 1979 under the direction of Terry Klein for the Alexandria Regional Preservation Office, and surface collections were made during construction in 1983 by J. N. Leith Smith for Alexandria Archaeology.

27. A history of potter Lewis Plum is provided in two Pickens manuscripts, "Lewis Wilson Plum," and "Early American Craftsmen," 2: "Lewis Wilson Plum, the Potter in the Dip," and also in Watkins, "The Pots and Potteries of Alexandria, Virginia." According to their research in Alexandria deed books, Plum worked with Piercy at Duke and Washington streets in 1797, and he and Thomas Hewes rented the pottery in 1799. In 1800 he worked with James Miller at Prince and St. Asaph streets. It is probably at this site that John Swann was an apprentice, beginning in 1803. Plum purchased a lot at 800 Wolfe Street in 1801, and added to this property and built a pottery there between 1813 and 1814.

28. Another potter, William J. Reynolds, produced stoneware at the corner of King and Fayette streets in Alexandria beginning in 1807 (44AX86). Richard Muzzrolo excavated part of the waster pile on this site, but the collection is not extant. Sherds of what appear to be gray stoneware bottles can be seen in a photograph of the site in Alexandria Archaeology's photographic archives. Pickens manuscript, "Potters—Little Known and Unknown," 34.

29. Plum passed away in 1821, and the pottery was run by Evans and Griggs from 1822 to 1828. *The Alexandria Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, March 7, 1822.

30. The author discusses these wares fully in Keith Barr, Pamela J. Cressey, and Barbara H. Magid, "How Sweet it Was: Alexandria's Sugar Trade and Refining Business," in *Historical Archaeology of the Chesapeake*, Paul A. Shackel and Barbara J. Little, eds., Smithsonian Institution Press (1994), 257–63.

31. The 1820 *Census of Manufacturers* (Original Schedules of the Fourth Census, 1820, National Archives Record Group 29, Washington, D.C.) shows the Swann pottery to be "in full and complete repair, and always has been for 11 (or 10) years in operation." An advertisement in 1820 also stated that the pottery was ten years old (*Daily National Intelligencer*, July 13, 1820). Swann purchased the lot from Jonathan Scholfield in 1813 (*Corporation Court City of Alexandria Deed Book Z*: 146–50, January 29, 1813, Alexandria Court House), but may have rented it from 1810 as the deed specified that "Scholfield will accept \$500 for the property and rent shall cease." Swann's history is discussed further in Myers, *Alexandria Salt-Glazed Stoneware*, 18–31, with the entry from the *Census of Manufacturers* reprinted on page 150, and in Myers, *The Potter's Art*, 7–12.

32. The earliest Swann advertisement read, "Stone-Ware Manufactory. The subscriber respectfully informs his customers that he has a large assortment of STONE-WARE on hand which will sell low for cash or on short credit—Country merchants can be supplied at the shortest notice." *The Alexandria Gazette Commercial & Political*, March 2, 1815.

33. Excerpted from the 1820 *Census of Manufacturers*, from "The Aggregate of 10 Potteries in the City of Baltimore State of Maryland, 5 Earthen—3 Stone & Earthen & 2 Stone only—", as

reproduced in John N. Pearce, "The Early Baltimore Potters and Their Wares, 1763-1850," M. A. thesis, University of Delaware (1959), 131.

34. Yellow ware is a hard-bodied buff-yellow colored earthenware with a clear alkaline glaze which was mass-produced from around 1830 to the 1930s. Yellow ware was fired between 2000 and 2200° F, and thus is sometimes nearly or fully vitrified (non-porous). Manufacturers referred to it as a fire-proof ware, meaning that it could be used for cooking. Usually produced in molds rather than on a wheel, yellow ware was used primarily for utilitarian forms such as mixing bowls, baking dishes and chamber pots. By the 1840s, yellow ware was decorated with bands of colored slip, usually in white, blue and brown. At least by the 1860s it was being produced in decorative molds, but this variety is rarely seen in Alexandria. Yellow ware was produced in Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Vermont, as well as in England and Canada. Alexandria's closest source was the Bennett pottery in Baltimore, which produced yellow ware and Rockingham (a molded yellow ware with a brown modeled glaze). Further information on yellow ware production can be found in Joan Leibowitz, *Yellow Ware: The Transitional Ceramic*, Shiffer Publishing Ltd., Exton, Pennsylvania (1985) and John Gallo, *Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Yellow Ware*, Heritage Press, Richfield Springs, New York (1985).

35. *The Alexandria Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, August 5, 1819. This notice shows that Swann's wares were advertised widely, with the same announcement appearing in newspapers in Winchester, Warrenton, Leesburg, Woodstock, and Charleston.

36. Myers, *The Potter's Art*, 9-10.

37. *The Alexandria Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, May 9, 1820. The price list, per dozen, reads as follows. Please note that a potters' dozen is variable and may not consist of twelve pieces.

3 gallon jugs, pots & pitchers	6 00 dolls.
2 do do do	4 50
1½ do do do	3 25
1 do do do	2 50
½ do do do	1 75
¼ do do do	1 00
⅓ do do do	50
2 gallon milk pans	4 00
1 do do	2 25
½ do do	1 50
4 gallon churns	9 50
3 do do	8 00
2 do do	6 00
Large chamber pots	2 33
Less do do	1 50

38. Rim profiles showing these vessel forms are illustrated in Myers, *Alexandria Salt-Glazed Stoneware*, Appendix II.

39. In 1931, Evelyn Abraham wrote about the stoneware of southwestern Pennsylvania, saying that "the best of the gray stoneware is decorated with blue—usually festoons in the well-known tulip pattern of Teutonic antecedents, the color applied freehand." As quoted in Phil Schaltenbrand, *Old Pots: Salt-Glazed Stoneware of the Greensboro-New Geneva Region*. Everybody's Press, Hanover, PA (1977), 51.

40. This pot is illustrated in Kristin B. Lloyd, *From Potter to Pantry: Nineteenth-Century*

*Stoneware*, catalogue of the Exhibition at the Lyceum, Alexandria's History Museum, (1992), 8, fig. 21.

41. H. E. Comstock, *The Pottery of the Shenandoah Valley Region*, (Winston-Salem, N.C.: Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, 1994), 104, figure 4.61.

42. Myers, *The Potter's Art*, 75.

43. The dates of the Butt Pottery are from Mark Walker and Liz Crowell, "Pottery from the Butt/Burnett Kiln, Washington, D.C.," paper presented at the Conference on Historical and Underwater Archaeology, Richmond, Virginia, January 1991 (paper on file at Alexandria Archaeology and at Parsons Engineering Science, Inc.). The author is familiar with six jars from a private collection marked R BUTT W. CITY DC. These include one pitcher with a stylized round flower similar to the one used in Alexandria, but with branches springing from four directions. One jar in the collection is decorated with three rows of small splotches, similar to Swann's decoration. Other jars are decorated with branching foliage and tulips similar to ones from the Wilkes Street pottery. One of these jars is decorated on the back with "C-shaped" branches of graduated leaves similar to those seen on Shenandoah Valley pottery. The similarities of design could indicate an interchange of workers between Alexandria, Washington, and the Shenandoah Valley, or could simply be a reflection of the documented trade in stoneware between these areas.

44. In *The Alexandria Gazette and Daily Advertiser* for August 5, 1819, Swann advertises prices 20 to 30 percent below Baltimore's.

45. John K. Pickens, "The Poor Potter of Alexandria, John B. Swann," and "Early Alexandria Craftsmen 3: John B. Swann, the Poor Potter of Alexandria," unpublished manuscripts on file at Alexandria Archaeology, provide a fuller history of the agreements between Swann and Smith.

46. *The Alexandria Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, March 22, 1822.

47. Pickens, *The Poor Potter*, 11-14, referencing *Corporation Court City of Alexandria Deed Book P2:55* (August 1, 1825) and *P2:60* (December 2, 1825), Alexandria Court House, and the *Phoenix Gazette* (later the *Alexandria Gazette*), March 21, 1825.

48. Pickens manuscripts, "B. C. Milburn and the Alexandria Pottery," and "Early Alexandria Craftsmen 4: B. C. Milburn and the Alexandria Pottery," unpublished manuscripts on file at Alexandria Archaeology.

49. His son, S. C. Milburn, stated in the *Alexandria Gazette*, February 24, 1869, that the pottery had been established in 1833.

50. Pickens, "The Poor Potter," 14, and "B. C. Milburn," 3.

51. From a chart entitled "Nineteenth Century Alexandria Potters and Merchants," in the papers of Robin Ruffner, on file at Alexandria Archaeology.

52. The name "Smith" is written in script on the bottom of a stamped B. C. Milburn jar in a private collection. This could refer to a member of the merchant family that owned the pottery, as no potter is known by that name.

53. James P. Smith was one of the partners in Hugh Smith & Co., and continued the business on his own from 1851 to 1854. Pickens, "Potters—Little Known and Unknown," 4. A pot stamped "J. P. SMITH" is in the MESA collection.

54. Myers, *The Potters' Art*, Appendix VII, 77.

55. One example of Virginia pottery combining slip-trailed and brushed cobalt decoration is a water cooler marked "STRASSBURG 1833" in the collection of the Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of American History, Division of Ceramics and Glass.

56. These pots are also in the collection of Mr. Al Steidel.

57. Comstock, *Pottery of the Shenandoah Valley*. This motif can be seen in many figures, including those on pages 214-15, 330, 340, and 381.

58. *Alexandria Gazette*, June 10, 1841.

59. His bankruptcy notice was listed in the *Alexandria Gazette* on February 20, 1843, but the corresponding court records are missing from the courthouse. A copy of the notice was provided to the author by T. Michael Miller.

The first known reference to Tildon Easton is an entry in the Class Membership Lists of the Trinity United Methodist Church (1802–1849). His wife Rebecca is first listed in 1832, with the name Cook crossed out and replaced with Easton, indicating their marriage. Tildon and Rebecca Cook Easton, were “Removed with certificate May 25, 1835.” Rebecca’s name continued to appear alone in the class lists until the last extant list in 1849.

In the 1840 Census, Easton is listed as being between the ages of twenty and thirty. Other members of his household included one female between the ages of twenty and thirty (his wife Rebecca), two females under the age of five (presumably their daughters), and one female between sixty and seventy (possibly his mother-in-law Rebecca Cook, whose name appears with Easton’s in some tax records). Also included in the household were another female between fifteen and twenty and a free black male, over fifty-five. These two individuals could have been boarders, or may have worked with Easton. Three people are listed in the census as being engaged in manufacturing or trade.

In the 1850 Census, Rebecca Easton, age thirty-five, is listed without her husband. At that time she is living with Robert Cook, age seventy-seven (probably her father), Sarah A. Rogers, age thirty-seven, Amelia Easton, age ten, and H. A. M. Easton (male), age eight. Rebecca Cook, his wife’s mother, appeared again in the 1860 census, and recorded a will in 1861 at age eighty-two, leaving all her property to a daughter in Charlottesville (*Corporation Court City of Alexandria Will Book #8*, 444, Alexandria Courthouse).

Tax records list Easton beneath the name of Rebecca Cook in the years 1840–1844 and 1846 at a one-story house and lot at Henry, Wilkes, and Patrick streets. The 1843 tax records are missing from the Alexandria Courthouse, and in 1845 Rebecca’s name appeared alone, and the property was listed as “idle.” Easton is also listed in tax records as a tenant on the pottery site in 1842 and 1843. Tildon Easton’s whereabouts after 1846 cannot be ascertained. (Research on Tildon Easton was conducted by Alexandria Archaeology volunteer Vivienne Mitchell, under direction of the author).

60. Georgeana H. Greer, “Basic Forms of Historic Pottery Kilns which may be Encountered in the United States.” *The Conference on Historic Site Archaeology Papers 10-8*, Stanley South, ed., Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina, Columbia, South Carolina (1979), Volume 13: 133–47.

61. Kenneth J. Barton, *Pottery in England from 3500 B.C.–A.D. 1730*. (Newton Abbott: David & Charles, 1975), 133.

62. Waster sherds of six earthenware flower pots and flower pot trays were found at the Easton site. The two trays, measuring 5” and 7” in diameter, are unglazed, with crimped pie-crust flanges and rims. The four flowerpot fragments have varying amounts of spotty green glaze on the exterior. They have one or more flanges, and crimped edges. The crimped flanges and rims are created by pinching the clay with the fingers, in contrast with the earlier Plum flower pots, where the pie-crust effect was incised with a tool.

63. A description of the Pinson Pottery Company in Tennessee includes a discussion of the use of a mixture of Albany and Seneca Falls slip: “The Albany clay is, of course, often used alone, but the Seneca Falls slip is very hard to fuse, and in consequence Albany slip is usually added to it, the proportions of the mixture being one-third Seneca Falls, two-thirds Albany. The Seneca Falls slip costs somewhat more than the Albany clay. It is not so easy to dissolve as the Albany slip clay, but when it dissolved covers the ware more evenly. When used alone it gives a beautiful bright olive glaze. Used in combination with Albany slip, it brightens the col-

oration of the latter and also gives a somewhat greenish tint." Most other Albany type slips appear brown or brownish-black in color. Edward C. Eckel, Stoneware and Brick Clays of Western Tennessee and Northwestern Mississippi. Contributions to Economic Geology 1902. *United States Geological Survey Bulletin* No. 213, (1903), 382-91, as quoted by Samuel D. Smith and Stephen T. Rogers, in *A Survey of Historic Pottery Making in Tennessee*, Division of Archaeology, Tennessee Department of Conservation (1979), 120.

64. The use of calcined bone in the making of stoneware was discussed with Reggie Blazczek and materials scientist Henry Hodges, who both suggested that it could be used to lighten the color. A test for potassium may show the presence of bone ash in the clay.

65. The Butt/Burnett site, located between H and I streets and Seventh and Eighth streets in northwest Washington, D.C., was excavated in 1989 by Engineering Science, Inc. Information on the site and artifacts is contained in Walker and Crowell, *Pottery from the Butt/Burnett Kiln*.

66. This article, reprinted from the *Virginia Sentinel* in the January 10, 1855, issue of the *Alexandria Gazette*, was brought to the author's attention in 1991 by T. Michael Miller, Research Historian for the office of Historic Alexandria, City of Alexandria, Virginia.

67. Flower pots, stovepipe collars, churns, butter jars, pans, and fruit jars with cork and cement were itemized on a business card, dated 1859, in the Monroe-Milburn family records. A purchase order dated 1849, in the collection of the Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Shop Museum, shows that John Leadbeater, a chemist and seed wholesaler, ordered two- and three-inch pots from Milburn. These documents were described by Suzita Myers in *The Potter's Art*, 26-27.

68. The late arrival of the railroads in Alexandria was blamed by many Alexandrians on its inclusion in the District of Columbia in the March 17, 1871 issue of the *Alexandria Gazette*. "During the 50 years she formed a part of the district, she made no advancement in population, and lost most of her valuable trade and commerce by the building of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad from Baltimore, and the Central, now the C&O . . . from Richmond. . . . As soon as we obtained representation in the state legislature, we at once set to work to regain our lost trade, by applying for charters to build railroads."

69. According to the *Alexandria Gazette*. "The war chilled the growing enterprise of the place, destroyed its social life and annihilated its trade" (January 2, 1864).

70. Some oblique references to an interruption of operations during the war are discussed in Myers, *Alexandria Salt-Glazed Stoneware*, 44.

71. *Alexandria Gazette*, April 3, 1867.

72. The announcement reads: "THE POTTERY of the late Mr. Milburn, which he carried on with so much credit to himself, for many years, will be continued under the control of his son. This is another of the old and successful manufacturing establishments of this place. Its wares are well known throughout the country, and considered the very best of their kind." *Alexandria Gazette*, April 10, 1867.

73. Pickens, "B. C. Milburn," 16-17.



# The Lowndes Stoneware Pottery of Petersburg, Virginia

CHARLES EDWARD UMSTOTT

By the early nineteenth century, the south-central Virginia town of Petersburg had become a thriving Tidewater community. Its location at the falls of the Appomattox River, near its confluence with the James River, was uniquely favorable for the production of fine stoneware, having the combination of excellent water transportation and a source of good stoneware clay on each side of the James River. The navigable water of the James provided an avenue for the widespread distribution of finished goods crafted in the area.

The Lowndes pottery produced gray and gray-brown salt-glazed stoneware, as well as a hard-burned, glazed earthenware. It is distinctive in being one of the few southern potteries that adorned its wares with high-quality cobalt decoration and script signatures that identified the maker, the town, the state, and in several cases, the date "1841." It employed a wide range of forms, including forms common to other materials.

Thomas Lowndes and his wife Elizabeth came to Blandford (now a part of Petersburg), Virginia, from Staffordshire, England, in 1805. They had also lived for a time in Lancashire.<sup>1</sup> What training and experience Lowndes had as a potter in England is unknown. According to court records cited by early Petersburg historians,<sup>2</sup> the Lowndes had three sons, Henry, Thomas, and John, and three daughters, Elizabeth, Ellen, and Mary. The pottery site was on lot 56, one of

one hundred lots laid out on a map by W. Harrison in 1782 and dispersed in the Blandford real estate lottery, recorded on July 6, 1785. Charles Duncan is listed in court records as first owner of this lot.<sup>3</sup> This location would now be approximately one hundred feet east of the northeast corner of Crater Road and Wyrthe Street, extending back 210 feet with a 100 foot frontage on Wyrthe Street. The pottery site is at present partially covered by commercial development.

On December 2, 1806, Thomas Lowndes placed the following advertisement in the *Petersburg Intelligencer*, possibly on the occasion of the opening of his pottery:

Stoneware Manufactory—Thomas Lowndes takes this opportunity to inform the public, that he has established and is now carrying on the above business in Blandford, near the Church, and flatters himself that the articles are of equal, if not superior, to any imported, and hopes to meet with that encouragement, he has every reason to expect, as he sells at the lowest prices. Orders received at his store in Bollingbrook Street or at the Pottery, where a constant supply of ware is always ready packed, and also open for sale.<sup>4</sup>

Only six years later, on October 1, 1811, the *Petersburg Intelligencer* reported that Thomas Lowndes, a resident of Petersburg, had died on September 27.<sup>5</sup> His family was able to carry on the business after his death. Later in October, young Thomas began advertising the pottery again with almost the same wording as the earlier notice, adding, “The above business is carried on as usual.”<sup>6</sup> A June 2, 1812, advertisement in the same newspaper proclaimed that the business carried on, still listed under the name of Thomas Lowndes, and that county merchants could be “supplied at the shortest notice.”

By 1812 at least two of the Lowndes sons had been trained as potters. Kenneth Scott’s *British Aliens in the United States during the War of 1812* lists the following members of the Lowndes family:

Lowndes, Elizabeth, age 53, in U.S. since 1805, 6 in family, Petersburg, potter (12–26 March 1812); Lowndes/Lownes, John, age 16, 8 years in U.S., Petersburg, potter (21–27 March 1813), 5 feet 3 inches, fair comple-

xion, brown hair, black eyes; Lowndes/Lownes, Thomas, age 20, 8 years in U.S., Petersburg, potter (21–27 March 1813), 5 feet 8 inches, fair complexion, brown hair, gray eyes.

It is interesting that Henry Lowndes, who was the only son to remain involved with the pottery, was not listed; he may have established U.S. citizenship by this time.

Petersburg historian William Stanton described the management of the pottery and the extent of the Lowndes family's operations.

Thomas Lowndes, Sr. operated the pottery in Blandford until his death in September 1811. Henry, the oldest son continued the operation and purchased additional lots adjoining the pottery until his death in 1842. At the time of his death, Henry was also part owner of a china and pottery store, Hatcher and Lowndes, on the north side of Bollingbrook in Petersburg. The owner, Henry Lowndes, was an Englishman and resided for a long time in the old rock house in the rear of the Baptist mission with his three maiden sisters, misses Mary, Elizabeth, and Ellen. They were very strict and devout Episcopalians and had the peculiarity that they never walked abreast, as it was their custom to Indian file in going to church or elsewhere.

After her husband's death, Elizabeth Lowndes had a major role in the business. According to Stanton, an ad appearing in a Petersburg paper in 1818 refers to "E. Lowndes, earthenware and stoneware, manufactory Blandford."<sup>8</sup> Perhaps Elizabeth Lowndes ran the business while her sons operated the production of the pottery.

Her sons Thomas and John seem to have disengaged themselves from the business within a few years after their father's death. The Petersburg, Virginia, Hastings Court Deed Book lists a title transfer between Thomas and his mother on May 9, 1814: "Deed of Bargain and Sale from Thomas Lowndes (son) of Petersburg to Elizabeth Lowndes, mother of said Thomas for \$200.00. Thomas does hereby release, makeover, sell and dispose of all his right title and interest in and to the estate of his deceased father, Thomas Lowndes both real and personal of whatsoever nature and kind to said Elizabeth and

Ellen Lowndes for their joint benefit."<sup>9</sup> A similar deed of sale is recorded on May 28, 1817, between John Lowndes and Elizabeth the mother and Ellen and Elizabeth the daughters in Deed Book #5 covering 1816–1818.<sup>10</sup> These transfers of property suggest that the two sons were dissociating themselves from the business, consolidating it in their mother's hands, and possibly leaving the area.

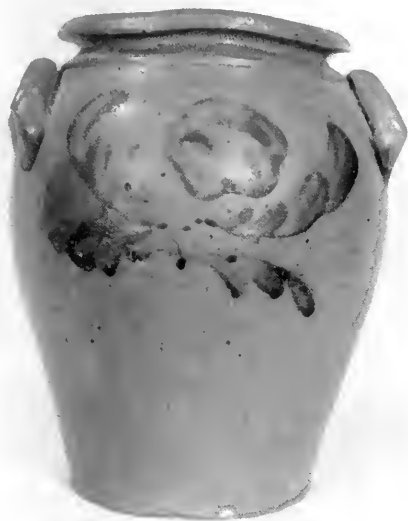
The pottery continued to be operated by the Lowndes family until the year 1855; Henry Lowndes played an important role until his death in 1842. In 1855 the business was sold to Thomas and John Ducey, who continued it on their Watson Street site for some time. They then moved it to the Lowndes pottery on Wythe Street.

#### LOWNDES CERAMIC FORMS AND DECORATION

With a dearth of archaeological information and only one date, appearing several times on Lowndes pottery, it is difficult to establish a chronology for the period the Lowndes pottery was in operation. No vessels can be identified as being made from 1806 to 1811 when Thomas Lowndes ran the pottery, but it is possible that some of the unpainted, utilitarian stoneware vessels date from that time. No signed or marked earthenware examples have been identified.

The form of most of the utilitarian vessels made by the Lowndes pottery is ovoid. Some that may represent the early period have loop or lug handles, many of which are round or rolled rather than extruded and concave. The rim may be rolled, with a deep concave groove, or straight. The vessels that can be attributed to the Henry Lowndes period by their decoration generally have extruded concave handles. Only one cylindrical or straight-sided vessel is known to exist.

Examples of Lowndes pottery that seem to reflect a relatively early style of decoration have brush-painted outlines of stemless flowers, sometimes placed over festoons of long, slender, curvilinear leaves (fig. 1). Sometimes circles are painted around the neck of the vessel together with leafy fronds on the body (fig. 2). In contrast, the pot-

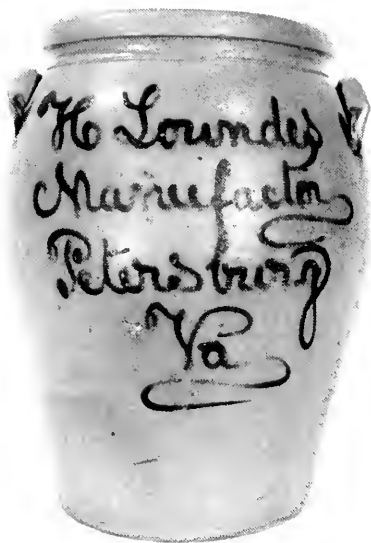


1. Storage jar, Lowndes pottery, 1805–1855, Petersburg, Va. HOA 9½". *Private collection.* The loosely painted decoration of this jar may represent an early style, possibly from the period when Thomas Lowndes ran the pottery (1805–1811).

tery made while Henry Lowndes directed the pottery, from 1811 to his death in 1842, is readily identifiable by its decoration. He, or decorators working for him, signed his vessels in bold script with trailed slip (fig. 3) and decorated them with distinctive floral designs. This decoration generally consists of a flower with three petals, painted close together like a tulip's, on a straight or slightly curving stem with leaves (fig. 3a). A few examples have been found with wavy or corkscrew stems (fig. 4). The leaves are usually in pairs and look almost like dragonfly wings, painted at right angles from the stem (fig. 3a). Not infrequently, however, the paired leaves are angled upward in an open "V" form (fig. 5). Some examples have terminal three-petalled flowers that resemble a three-leafed clover (figs. 6, 7, 8).



2. Crock, Lowndes pottery, 1805–1855, Petersburg, Va. HOA 8".  
*Private collection.* This food storage container is incised with the word "Peaches" and with open circles and floral motifs similar to the vessel in fig. 4.



3. Storage jar, Lowndes pottery, 1805–1855, Petersburg, Va. HOA 11" 8". *Private collection.* The cobalt inscription, "H Lowndes / Manufactor / Petersburg / VA," applied with a slip cup, is in a script typical of the Lowndes pottery.



2a. Reverse side of fig. 5, showing the incised inscription, "Elizabeth Fournay."



3a. Reverse side of fig. 1, with a common form of Lowndes floral decoration. Note the tight terminal buds and the painted leaves growing at right angles from the stems.



4. Large storage jar, Lowndes pottery, 1805–1855, Petersburg, Va. HOA 16". *Private collection*. As well as the unusual corkscrew stems of the flowers that appear together with the signature, "H. Lowndes / Maker / Petersburg, Va.," on the front, this jar has a large floral motif on the reverse side.



5. Ovoid storage jar, Lowndes pottery, 1805–1855, Petersburg, Va. HOA 11 $\frac{3}{8}$ ". *Private collection*. The combination of the slip-trailed inscription, "H Lowndes / Manufacturer / Petersburg / Va" with extensive floral decoration on one side of a vessel is unusual.



6. Storage jar, Lowndes pottery, 1805–1855, Petersburg, Va. HOA 1178". *Private collection*. This jar has scalloped, slip-trailed decoration around the shoulder and painted floral decoration on the body.



7. Tobacco jar with lid, attributed to the Lowndes pottery, 1805–1855, Petersburg, Va. HOA 758". *Private collection*. The painted flower decoration is repeated at three places around the jar, and the lid is decorated as well.

One unusual variation consists of a horizontally undulating line decorated with cloverlike flowers and paired leaves (fig. 9).

While generally the vessels have the signature on one side and painted floral decoration on the other, in a few cases the signature and floral motifs were combined on one side of the vessel (fig. 5). The signature on one straight-sided, cylindrical jar is flanked by floral decoration, with the reverse undecorated (fig. 10).

One ovoid food storage container has an incised inscription on both sides: "Elizabeth Fournay" on one side, and the word "Peaches"





8. Storage jar, Lowndes pottery, 1805–1855, Petersburg, Va. HOA 9¾". *Private collection.* This jar, with relatively primitive painted floral decoration, is signed on the reverse.



9. Storage jar, Lowndes pottery, 1805–1855, Petersburg, Va. HOA 12". *Private collection.* The horizontal orientation of this floral motif is unusual. The vessel is signed on the reverse, "H. Lowndes / Maker / Petersburg / Va."

on the other (figs. 2, 2a). The painted cobalt circles and festoons of leaves are typical of the decoration that may represent the early period of production at the pottery, while its extruded handles are like those seen on vessels, including the decorative water coolers, of the later period.

The Lowndes pottery did not use stamps to identify its wares. The signature on the vessels usually appears as "H. Lowndes," but occasionally "Henry Lowndes" was spelled out in full. Below the signature the word "Maker" or "Manufactor" appeared, followed by

“Petersburg / Va.” or rarely “Petersburg Virginia.” For some reason, the only date known to appear on Lowndes pottery is 1841 (fig. 11). The significance of this date is unknown. No vessels can be firmly attributed to the period after Henry Lowndes’ death in 1842.

The products of the Ducey pottery operation (c. 1854–1878) were similar in form to the Lowndes pottery, but they were marked with a stamp imprint rather than a cobalt slip signature. The Ducey floral decoration, with open tulip petals and realistic tulip leaves, is also different and should not be confused with Lowndes forms.



10. Storage jar, Lowndes pottery, 1805–1855, Petersburg, Va. HOA 13". *Private collection.* This vessel's cylindrical form is unusual. The slip-trailed inscription, "H. Lowndes / Manufactor / Petersburg / Va" is flanked by loosely painted floral decoration on the sides, and the reverse is unpainted.



11. Storage jar, Lowndes pottery, 1841, Petersburg, Va. HOA 13<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>". *Private collection.* This vessel bears the slip-trailed inscription, "Henry Lowndes / Maker / Petersburg Virginia / 1841"; it is unusual in that it is dated and the words "Henry" and "Virginia" are spelled out in full.

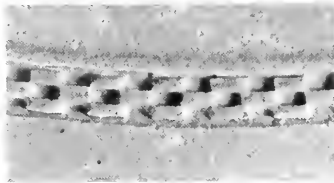
Henry Lowndes made decorative vessels that rival those of any American pottery of the late eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries. The design and execution of these pieces is superb. Two water coolers and two pitchers are known; all are adorned with a cobalt-painted, sprigged eagle and stars and profuse painted cobalt floral decoration.

The water coolers are of very different forms. One is ovoid, thrown in two pieces, with the body and foot joined before firing (fig. 12). It has free-standing loop or lug handles. The body is decorated with a sprigged spread-winged eagle over an oval medallion that is applied to the vessel, and thirteen sprigged six-pointed stars that encircle the eagle. All have been painted with cobalt. It also has cobalt-painted festoons of flowers extending from the bung hole around the lower body, and the reverse is signed "H. Lowndes, Manufacturer, Petersburg Va." The ends of the handle are decorated with cobalt blue where they are attached to the body. The edge of the base has a ring of relief decoration, resembling a chain, that was impressed with a coggle wheel (fig 12a). The inside of the foot is hollow.

The second water cooler is a classical or federal form, possibly copied from a silver or Sheffield urn (fig. 13). It has sprigged decoration similar to that of the ovoid water cooler, except that the thirteen stars outline the shape of the eagle in an inverted triangle. Its handles are extruded and applied to the body of the vessel. The foot and body were turned separately and then joined before firing, with a decorative molding covering the join. The sloping shoulder has a ring of flowers and leaves painted in cobalt between two rings of coggle decoration, probably made by the



12. Water cooler, Lowndes pottery, 1805–1855, Petersburg, Va. HOA 16". *Private collection.* This ovoid-bodied water cooler has molded, applied eagle and stars that have been painted with cobalt, and painted cobalt flowers. It is signed on the reverse, "H Lowndes / Manufacturer / Petersburg / Va."



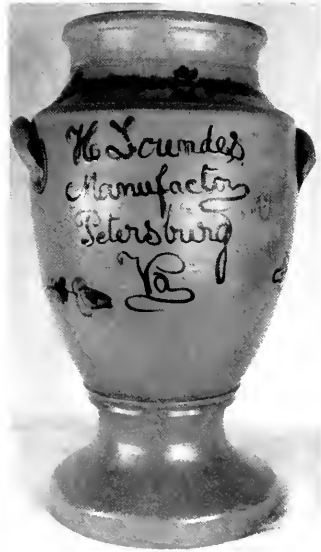
12a. Coggle decoration used on the two known Lowndes water coolers (figs. 12 and 13).



13. Water cooler, Lowndes pottery, 1805–1855, Petersburg, Va. HOA 19"8". *Private collection.* The urn shape of this water cooler is reminiscent of silver or Sheffield urns.



13a. Side view of fig. 13, showing the unusual painted foliate decoration on the shoulder and extending out from the water cooler's spigot.



13b. Reverse of fig. 13, showing the slip-trailed signature, "H Lowndes / Manufactory / Petersburg / Va."

same tool used on the water cooler in fig. 12; long festoons of flowers and leaves also extend out from the bung hole (fig. 13a). As on the ovoid water cooler, the floral decoration consists of a long wavy stem with clusters of leaves painted close together, between pairs of three-petaled flowers growing on short stalks perpendicular to the stem. The reverse is signed in script, "H. Lowndes / Manufactory / Petersburg / Va" (fig. 13b). The lips of both coolers are slightly uneven and show no signs of wear from a lid. Vessels of this nature were often

covered with cloth or wax paper tops secured with string to keep out insects.

A third water cooler, with a barrel-shaped body and the same sprigged and cobalt-painted eagle and stars, plus four raised, painted horizontal bands, appears in Clarence P. Hornung's *Treasury of American Design and Antiques*;<sup>11</sup> it seems to be very similar to the other Lowndes water coolers, but its provenance and current location are unknown.

One of the pitchers attributed to the Lowndes pottery has an ovoid body and is decorated with a sprigged eagle and six-pointed stars, eleven around the shoulder of the pitcher and two on each side of the eagle (fig. 14). The spout is decorated with an impressive flower and acanthus motif, and it is angled to the right to make pouring easier for a right-handed person. The extruded handle is attached to the short cylindrical neck and the body; the base of the



14. Pitcher, attributed to the Lowndes pottery, 1805–1855, Petersburg, Va. HOA 1176". *Private collection.* The eagle and star applied decoration on this ovoid pitcher are similar to those on the water coolers in figs. 12 and 13. The pitcher's spout, with molded, applied flower and acanthus decoration, is angled to the right to make pouring easier for a right-handed person.



14a. Side view of fig. 14, showing painted floral decoration with double or triple paired leaves.

handle bears an impressed thumbprint. Sprays of flowers and leaves that are more loosely and gracefully painted than those on the water coolers extend around the sides (fig. 14a).

This presentation of extant examples of the Lowndes pottery's production is only a beginning. In his research, Stanton discovered thousands of fragments of pottery, stilts, and burned bricks from the kiln itself at the Lowndes pottery site. Pottery fragments he found there had cobalt blue borders and designs like the tulip and other floral decoration used. Excavation and analysis of the kiln site and waster piles would permit a more comprehensive evaluation of the forms, both utilitarian and those designed for special use. The existence of particularly large numbers of signed pieces is of great help in the study of these ceramics. It can help in the development of a

chronology of the Lowndes pottery style and in expanding our knowledge of the forms produced by this outstanding pottery.

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#### NOTES

1. William L. Stanton, "Pottery Here Eighty Years Ago," *Petersburg Evening Progress*, May 18, 1921.
2. Documentation for the early history of Petersburg are sketchy, since many early records were destroyed by fire during the Civil War. Much of the history of the Lowndes family depends on two sources: a history compiled by Milton Thrift, a retired Methodist minister, around 1850 (now lost), and a newspaper article by William L. Stanton, "Pottery Here Eighty Years Ago," published in the *Petersburg Evening Progress*, May 18, 1921, which drew heavily on Thrift's account. The "court records" Stanton cites have been lost or destroyed.
3. Blandford Real Estate Lottery, July 6, 1785.
4. *Petersburg Intelligencer*, December 30, 1806.
5. *Ibid.*, October 1, 1811.
6. *Ibid.*, November 8, 1811 (the advertisement was placed on October 22, 1811).
7. *Ibid.*, June 2, 1812.
8. Stanton, "Pottery Here Eighty Years Ago."
9. Hastings Court Deed Book #4, May 9, 1814, p. 242, Petersburg, Va.
10. Hastings Court Deed Book #5, 1816–1818, Petersburg, Va.
11. Clarence P. Hornung, *Treasury of American Design and Antiques* (New York: Abrams, 1950), p. 354, pl. 1232.

# Exploring Western Virginia Potteries

KURT C. RUSS

## INTRODUCTION

Despite the research potential Virginia pottery holds for understanding the transplantation and adaptation of Old World pottery traditions, the “dynamic process” of changing production and consumption patterns, and the effects of industrialization on the trade, until recently only limited research on the subject had been undertaken.

Within the last decade, documentary and archaeological research concerning the counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Rockbridge, Augusta, and Rockingham has ranged from descriptive, site-specific kiln excavations to county and regional surveys of pots, potters, and potteries. As a result of this recent work, our knowledge of Virginia's pottery industry both within and beyond this region has been significantly enhanced. The types and range of variation in wares, the individual potters responsible for their production, the nature of the technology employed in their manufacture, the factors affecting pottery site location, the industry's evolution, the industrial transformation of the traditional craft industry, and the marketing and consumerism of Virginia ceramics can now be more fully explored, documented, and understood. The importance of the pottery of these five counties, located in the upper Shenandoah Valley (also called the “ridge-and-valley” region of Virginia), can be best understood in the context of Virginia pottery in general. A look at the his-



torical background of the pottery industry in Virginia from the earliest days of settlement, and the ways in which archaeologists have begun to approach the study of pottery sites, can reveal much about the nature of the ceramics in these western counties and why they flourished, as well as suggest areas for future research.

#### HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF VIRGINIA'S POTTERY INDUSTRY

Virginia's pottery industry began in the Tidewater, probably soon after the settlement of Jamestown in 1607. A number of potters were active in the area in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries; most of them supplied wares for local use.<sup>1</sup> One, William Rogers, who is known as the "Poor Potter" of Yorktown had a successful pottery factory<sup>2</sup> that exported its wares to New England, North Carolina, and even the West Indies in the second quarter of the eighteenth century.<sup>3</sup> For the most part, Tidewater pottery relied on English earthenware techniques and forms.

Despite the success of the Yorktown pottery operation, the Tidewater area of Virginia was never to develop an extensive ceramic industry. The lack of availability of good stoneware clays and the domination of the plantation economy, which was dependent on its extensive commerce network, contributed to a continued reliance upon imported items. In fact, during the eighteenth century there was limited promotion for wares produced by local cottage industries in Virginia.

It was not until the first quarter of the nineteenth century that the ridge-and-valley region of Virginia emerged as a center for pottery production; it was to dominate Virginia pottery production throughout the nineteenth century. All the prerequisites for the development of successful pottery enterprises existed within this region: the availability of natural resources (suitable clay deposits, water sources, fuel supply) and a steadily expanding population.<sup>4</sup>

By the mid-1700s, immigrants were traveling south along the

Great Philadelphia Wagon Road from southeastern Pennsylvania through the Valley of Virginia, and westward through southwestern Virginia and northeastern Tennessee. This migration resulted in the establishment of towns and communities progressively farther south and west, providing population centers large enough to support skilled artisans capable of producing much needed items from local raw materials.

One of the most important and prominent groups of potters to settle in the northern Shenandoah valley was the Bell family. Peter Bell, Jr., the son of Peter Bell, Sr., the patriarch of the Virginia branch of the German family, started in the pottery business in Hagerstown, Maryland (ca. 1805–1824) before settling in Winchester, Virginia during 1824.<sup>5</sup> Peter's sons, John, Samuel, and Solomon, developed significant potting skills as they participated in the Winchester business. During the 1830s, both Samuel and Solomon moved on "up" the valley to Strasburg in Shenandoah County<sup>6</sup> where they initiated a pottery tradition which ultimately resulted in Strasburg being referred to as "Pot Town."

The earliest manifestation of this largely Germanic pottery tradition in the northern valley is represented by an enormous variety of both strictly utilitarian and highly decorated earthenwares. The multi-colored glazes of white, brown (iron or manganese oxide), green (copper oxide), and yellow clay slip used on these earthenware bodies resulted in bold and striking vessels that are now widely recognized. Although most of their wares were hand-thrown, the Bell family of potters also produced distinctive mold-made and hand-formed pieces.

Equally remarkable are the wares of the early nineteenth-century earthenware potters located farther "up" the Great Road in the extreme southwest of Virginia and northeastern Tennessee. These ranged from large ovoid storage jars and jugs with extruded handles, often embellished with splotted or trailed iron or manganese dioxide decorative touches beneath a clear lead overglaze, to small storage vessels with domed lids and polychrome slip decoration. These

wares were unquestionably produced or strongly influenced by a Moravian immigrant to the Virginia area.<sup>7</sup>

Other smaller earthenware pottery centers also developed, but aesthetically the wares they produced were, from a comparative perspective, unremarkable. Most significant is the concentration of earthenware pottery production in the Fincastle area of Botetourt County.<sup>8</sup> Here at least eleven potters were involved in the production of simple semi-ovoid earthenware storage vessels often embellished with combed and free-hand incised decorative treatments. Earthenware manufacture in this area appeared to continue to the early 1880s, well after earthenware had been abandoned and replaced by stoneware production in most northern potteries.

By the end of the initial quarter of the nineteenth century the vast majority of producers and consumers of Virginia pottery had become well aware of the potentially lethal effects of the lead glazes used on earthenware, leading to a demand for stoneware. Stoneware was recognized as a superior product for the storage, preservation, preparation, and consumption of food stuffs and beverages. Because stoneware was fired at a much higher temperature and glazed with salt rather than lead, it was highly durable and vitreous, and above all offered no threat of toxicity to the consumers. Stoneware pottery production techniques were also being successfully transplanted to Virginia by this time as a result of both the diffusion of knowledge regarding stoneware production and its success in the north, and the movement of individuals trained in this tradition into the Valley.

The salt-glazed stoneware tradition spread across Virginia with successful manufacturing centers in cities such as Alexandria,<sup>9</sup> Richmond,<sup>10</sup> and Petersburg<sup>11</sup> as well as throughout the Valley from Winchester (Frederick County) to Washington County in southwest Virginia.<sup>12</sup> Stoneware production was initiated in Strasburg, Shenandoah County, in the first quarter of the nineteenth century and continued successfully until, by the last half of the century, it had grown to such an extent that the area contained the largest concentration of stoneware production in the Valley.<sup>13</sup> Another key pottery center was

in Rockingham County, where over fifty-three potters were involved in the industry at no fewer than twelve different potteries.<sup>14</sup> Significant among these was Emmanuel Suter, who developed an extensive operation and continued to produce wares well into the twentieth century.<sup>15</sup>

Alleghany and Rockbridge counties also developed successful stoneware operations. The remarkable pottery of George N. Fulton, sometimes decorated with elaborate tree and floral motifs, executed with both cobalt oxide and manganese dioxide, is significant in Alleghany County from 1867 to 1880.<sup>16</sup> The somewhat earlier manifestation of this tradition (ca. 1830) in Rockbridge illustrates how early ceramic traditions spread from one part of the country to another.<sup>17</sup> John S. Morgan, a potter trained in the northern stoneware tradition at the Commeraw Pottery in New York, successfully transplanted the strongly Germanic-influenced tradition to rural Rockbridge. Farther south in southwest Virginia, the stoneware tradition flourished in the second half of the nineteenth century, most notably in Washington County, where over thirty-eight potters are known.<sup>18</sup> Although an enormous quantity of wares was produced in this area, they are decidedly less decorative and strictly utilitarian.

Despite the somewhat limited nature of the information currently available, broad patterns in the development of Virginia pottery can be ascertained. Beginning with initial settlement in Jamestown and continuing for two centuries, earthenware—basically a conservative transplanted English tradition—dominated Virginia pottery production. In the late eighteenth century, German influence is noted in certain earthenware forms and decorative techniques, particularly among “Great Road” and Strasburg potters. With the exception of the Poor Potter’s successful production of stoneware during the 1720–1745 period, it is not until the first quarter of the next century that stonewares begin to replace the functionally “inferior” earthenwares. Salt-glazed stoneware rapidly spread throughout Virginia, most notably in the heart of the Shenandoah Valley. The nineteenth-century manifestation of the industry represented a continua-

tion of both diffusion of knowledge and direct immigration down the “Great Road” of those trained in the successful northern tradition that was transplanted from Germany. During this earthenware-stoneware transition, the typical European style kilns of the earthenware tradition were replaced by the characteristic nineteenth-century oval and circular up- and down-draft kilns. Several other changes accompanied this transition, including a significantly larger number and expanded geographical distribution of potters within the state; the use of brushed blue cobalt oxide as the dominant decorative treatment, replacing the multicolored clay slips and lead glazes frequently seen on earthenware; and the production of a greater variety of vessel forms.<sup>19</sup>

In addition, the nature of the wares produced changed considerably. Early earthenware forms included flat-shaped wares, bowls, pans, and porringers, and larger ovoid vessels, all of which relate to both the serving and preparation as well as storage and preservation of foodstuffs. Stoneware forms were quite varied but generally intended for food storage and preservation, with earthenware forms by the third quarter of the nineteenth century being restricted to flower pots, roofing tiles, firebricks, chimney pots, and related articles. Another factor important in this transition was the availability, by the nineteenth century, of queen’s ware and other imported refined ceramic types suitable for replacing the earthenwares, particularly in the context of tablewares for food serving.

The general decline in the pottery industry in the late nineteenth century relates to the difficulty most traditional potters faced in negotiating the transition from traditional handcraft industry production to industrialized or mass production. In fact only a few, probably less than 5 percent, were successful in making the transition to industrialization and surviving into the twentieth century. Those who were successful *either* totally embraced industrialization, including its mechanized production with manufacture segmented by task and technology (which often involved unskilled workers trained in one particular aspect of manufacture, and the imposition of sched-

ules and standardized vessel sizes and forms) or, like Suter, integrated particular aspects of industrialization in the running of a traditional pottery. The reasons for the industry's ultimate demise relate specifically to industrialization and the problems traditional potters faced in embracing both new technologies and the changing mode and relations of production in an evolving capitalist economy that could provide mass quantities of alternative goods at lower prices.<sup>20</sup>

#### UNDERSTANDING THE POTTERY INDUSTRY IN WESTERN VIRGINIA

##### *Research Approaches*

Based on a review and assessment of relevant published and unpublished literature, several specific research approaches to the study of western Virginia pottery have been identified. These research approaches include a thematic survey identifying potters and potteries across the state wherein the forthcoming data is evaluated within a hypothetical-deductive framework addressing questions ranging from factors affecting pottery location, to the evolution of the industry both spatially and temporally; and archaeological testing and excavation of individual pottery sites. With respect to future research directions, topics to be addressed are: 1) documentation of both extant and archaeologically recovered ceramics providing a basis for analyses of time-sensitive attributes allowing coarsewares status as important temporal types; 2) the need for and value of systematic quantification of Virginia pottery from archaeological contexts with respect to form, decorative treatments, maker's and capacity marks, and stylistic attributes; 3) analysis of documentary data relating to the cost of earthenware versus stoneware, and of varying forms of each type of ware, to understand the marketing and consumption of nineteenth-century pottery; and 4) textual research to better understand the industrial transformation of the traditional handcraft industry.

*A Statewide Thematic Survey of the Traditional  
Pottery Industry*

In 1984, Washington and Lee University's Laboratory of Anthropology initiated an investigation of the traditional pottery manufacturing industry in Virginia. The project's research design combines both documentary and archaeological research and focuses on the identification of historic pottery manufacturing sites, the individual potters associated with these sites, and the types and varieties of wares produced.<sup>21</sup>

The statewide survey, together with detailed investigations of particular potteries, is intended to reveal information regarding the technological history of the pottery manufacturing industry in Virginia.<sup>22</sup> The data generated from this work is also used to address the economics involved in the production and consumption of historic pottery, as well as the effects of industrialization on this traditional industry.

Several hypotheses were articulated in order to address these issues, as well as those relating to: 1) site selection for the establishment of a pottery; 2) the earthenware to stoneware transition; 3) the effect of the Civil War on the industry; 4) the changing distribution of potteries through time and across space; and 5) the factors accounting for the industry's demise.<sup>23</sup> The specific hypotheses are as follows:

1. Site selection for the establishment of a pottery depended upon a variety of factors, the most important being a suitable source of clay.

2. The dominant economic pattern from the seventeenth until the mid-nineteenth century is one in which regional "family-operated" potteries provided utilitarian wares for localized markets.

3. The evolution of the early earthenware pottery manufacturing tradition in the east into a more homogeneous stoneware tradition to the west of the Blue Ridge is seen as a result of a) an increased availability of good stoneware clays in the west, b) a shift in the tech-

nology of this early industry, and c) an increase in the consumption of stoneware beginning in the early nineteenth century.

4. There is an increase in the number of potteries established during the period from 1860 to 1865. Coinciding with the Civil War, this increase is viewed as a response to the restricted supply of European export wares and an increased demand for common handmade wares.

5. By 1880 there should be evidence of a shift in the location of potteries towards major urban centers as a result of both the industrial transformation of the industry and changing demographic patterns.

6. As a result of increasing industrialization, by the turn of the nineteenth century, the vast majority of the small "family-operated" potteries were no longer in existence, the demand for stoneware dropped, and the continuation of the traditional pottery manufacturing industry was no longer economically feasible.<sup>24</sup>

Two hundred and ninety-four potters, pottery-making sites, or pottery marks have been identified. This information has been compiled into a checklist of Virginia potters and potteries which is organized according to the county in which the potter worked or the pottery was located (tables 1-5).

The archaeological expectation was that the distribution of pottery-making sites would be fairly even geographically, reflecting the universal need and demand for the utilitarian wares produced by local potters. Assuming that the distribution of potters, potteries and pottery marks quantified here reflects the actual distribution of pottery sites, preliminary observation indicates that the geographical distribution is *not* even; the vast majority of potteries, 238 or 80.95%, are lineally distributed within the ridge-and-valley region, with 34 or 11.56% located in the piedmont, 21 or 7.14% in the Tidewater, and 1 or .34% in the Appalachian plateau regions.<sup>25</sup> The concentration of potteries within the ridge-and-valley region is explainable by the presence of lineally distributed population centers and a





1. The geographic distribution of pottery centers in Virginia.

major clay belt within this region. Another concentration of potteries is noted in the southern juncture of the Piedmont and Tidewater physiographic regions. Its early settlement, with nucleated population centers and the presence of residual clay beds exposed by major stream drainage associated with the James River, account for this concentration of potteries.

Of the total number of potters identified, ten are associated with seventeenth- and early-eighteenth-century pottery production (primarily earthenware) occurring exclusively in the eastern Tidewater, and 17 individuals working in seven counties (Henrico, Fairfax, Franklin, Frederick, Goochland, Rockbridge, Rockingham and Wythe) located throughout the state are associated with earthenware manufacturing during the late eighteenth century; the other 267 are associated with the nineteenth-century earthenware and stoneware manufacturing industry, although a few continue to work into the first quarter of the twentieth century.

An obvious pattern has emerged of pottery manufacturing sites being located near population centers and available clay sources (fig. 1). Other factors relating to the selection of a suitable site for the establishment of a pottery include an adequate source of fuel (wood), access to a water source, and close proximity to either an urban cen-

ter or a major roadway, river port, or railway that would provide a ready means for shipping wares and receiving supplies.<sup>26</sup>

Although the relative degree of importance of these factors has yet to be determined, some general trends can be recognized. During the seventeenth century, when the earliest potteries were being established in Virginia, access both to local resources and a local "support" population was undoubtedly of utmost importance. These factors probably continued to be of major importance, especially to the small folk or family-operated potteries that characterized the Virginia industry from the mid-eighteenth until the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, major routes of transportation were fairly well established and there was access to new markets and a variety of goods. As a result, the strong dependence earlier potters had on both local sources of clay and local markets began to diminish. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, many of these family operations were either abandoned or transformed, and what have been termed "industrial potteries" began to predominate, located near major urban centers.<sup>27</sup> It is clear that during this period, access to both local resources and local markets was of little significance, whereas the potter's reliance on the exportation of his wares and the receipt of shipments of supplies via the expanded transportation systems played a greater role.<sup>28</sup>

#### THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF POTTERY MANUFACTURING SITES IN WESTERN VIRGINIA

Since the inception of the statewide survey in 1984, research has been undertaken on a county-by-county basis with concentration on five counties within the ridge-and-valley region: Alleghany, Botetourt, Rockbridge, Augusta, and Rockingham.<sup>29</sup> Twenty-six pottery operations and ninety-eight potters, two affiliated with the late eighteenth and ninety-six with the nineteenth century, have been identified from these areas. Archaeological investigations have been con-

ducted at seven nineteenth-century kiln sites (Fulton, Waddell, Fin-castle, Rockbridge Baths, Firebaugh, Grimm, and Morris) within this region.

#### *Alleghany County Potters*

Five potters and two nineteenth-century pottery kiln sites have been identified in the Alleghany County area of Virginia (table 1).<sup>30</sup> Perhaps the best known of these potteries was that operated by George N. Fulton from 1867 until 1880 (fig. 2). The Fulton pottery site (44AY184) is located approximately 1 mile south of Boiling Spring, Virginia, on a hill in a relatively flat agricultural field. It consists of the remains of a circular kiln and a waster pile that contained a dense deposit of salt-glazed stoneware sherds and kiln furniture fragments.



2. Five-gallon salt-glazed stoneware churn with elaborate brushed manganese dioxide and cobalt oxide floral motif, "5" and signature "G.N. Fulton," Fulton pottery, Alleghany County, c. 1867–80. *Private collection.*



3. Allegheny County pottery, c. 1850–80 from left to right: 2 gallon salt-glazed jar stamped “T. R. Waddell”; small-mouthed earthenware jar stamped “G. A. Brown”; 1-gallon stoneware jar with brushed manganese decoration and signature “G. N. Fulton”; and 1-gallon jar with cobalt decoration and the initials “G. N. F.” *Private collection.*

Documentary and oral history research indicates that the kiln was of the circular updraft variety, a common nineteenth-century stoneware kiln. An interview with Mr. Daniel Arritt, who as a young man worked at Fulton’s pottery, revealed that the kiln held a thousand gallons of ware. The fully loaded kiln was fired for three days and three nights; after the ware was allowed to cool for two days, it was drawn, loaded onto a wagon (about 350 gallons to a two-horse load), and sold throughout the local community.<sup>31</sup>

In addition to manufacturing prodigious quantities of distinctive stoneware crocks, churns, jugs, jars, and other utilitarian storage vessels typically decorated with elaborate floral motifs in both manganese and cobalt oxides (fig. 3), Fulton also made tombstones, a few of which still survive.

The Thomas R. Waddell pottery, which operated from 1850 until the 1870s, is located approximately one and a half miles north of the Fulton pottery. Interviews with the land owners revealed that the old kiln was bulldozed; now a large circular concentration of artifacts remain on the ground, including numerous salt-glazed stoneware sherds, kiln furniture fragments, and bricks. Several of the sherds exhibited the maker's mark, "T.R. Waddell," with the abbreviation for Virginia, "VA."

#### *Botetourt County Potters*

As a part of the research effort dealing with Botetourt County, two mid-nineteenth century pottery kiln sites and 11 nineteenth-century potters have been identified, indicating that the Fincastle/Amsterdam district was an important pottery center for the region (table 2).<sup>32</sup> One of the two Botetourt potteries identified, the Fincastle kiln, has been tested<sup>33</sup> and intensively investigated.<sup>34</sup> Preliminary documentary research indicates that the Fincastle pottery was operated by Jacob Nofzinger and his sons, Joel and Mathias, who are listed on the 1850 Botetourt County census records as potters.

The excavations revealed structural foundations and features that have been interpreted as a single-chambered, two-flued, rectangular pottery kiln. The portions of the kiln that had not been destroyed included evidence of one central and two exterior kiln walls, separated by arched flues with mortared floors. These flues lead into smaller channels which provided a flue venting function representing the kiln's chimney base.<sup>35</sup> This sketch illustrates a hypothetical reconstruction of the Fincastle kiln, while, for comparative purposes, this drawing shows the characteristic structural features of a groundhog kiln.

Artifacts recovered from the site include glazed and unglazed earthenware waster sherds, fragments of earthenware tile, kiln furniture fragments, and miscellaneous artifacts. Artifact analysis indicates that a relatively restricted variety of lead-glazed earthenware utilitarian vessel forms were manufactured at the pottery. The nature of the artifact assemblage, with well-constructed, glazed, and fired



4. Three semi-ovoid earthenware storage jars with iron oxide wash and lead glaze, combed incised banded decoration, and applied handles, attributed to the Henkel-Spigle pottery, Botetourt County, c. 1830–50. *Private collection.*

earthenwares, suggests a technologically efficient operation. Reconstruction efforts show that the most common vessel form represented in the assemblage is the wide or open-mouthed storage crock.

The kiln furniture types encountered include hand-formed circular pins, placing bars, points, stilts, triangular pins, spurs, and sappers. These kiln furniture types are distinctively different from those observed on nineteenth-century stoneware pottery kiln sites and reflect the technology unique to manufacturing lead-glazed earthenwares.

Jesse Hinkel and Phillip Spigle also operated a pottery in Botetourt as early as 1830 and produced lead-glazed earthenwares utilizing both combing and free-hand incising as decorative treatments (fig. 4). One extant semi-ovoid lead-glazed storage vessel with lid is signed “Jesse Hinkel, Botetourt County, Virginia” and dated 1839 (fig. 5). This presentation piece exhibits a variety of incised decoration and was made by Hinkel for Mrs. Spigle. Although this is the only signed Hinkel piece known, several with similar form,



5. Semi-ovoid lead-glazed earthenware storage vessel with a variety of incised decoration on both the body of the vessel and matching lid. Jar is signed "Jesse Henkel, Botetourt County, Virginia," and dated 1839. It is a presentation piece made by Henkel for Mrs. Spigle, most likely his partner's mother. *MESDA acc. 3254*.

glaze, and decoration survive in local collections. A lead-glazed pitcher with an incised floral motif and an iron- and lead-glazed storage jar with lug handles are attributed to Spigle (figs. 6, 7).

The Obenchain (Obenshane) pottery was located along Mill Creek in Botetourt County and was probably started by Peter M. ("Potter Pete") Obenchain around 1850. Two signed pieces of Obenchain pottery have been identified (fig. 8). Both are tall, semi-ovoid, lead-glazed storage jars with distinctive applied handles and a flat, broad, outward-flaring rim. Incised on the bottom of one jar is "Matthew Obenshane 1868" (fig. 8a).

An elusive group of pottery collected in Botetourt County and areas to the south along the James River has locally been referred to as James River Basin pottery. Collectively the wares consist of thick-walled, well-constructed ovoid stoneware storage jars (fig. 9), jugs (fig. 10), and pitchers (fig. 11) ranging in size from one to six gallons in capacity, usually decorated with brushed blue cobalt floral motifs. Three vessels have been identified with animal motifs in blue cobalt,

6. One-gallon iron and lead-glazed earthenware pitcher with incised floral motif or Tree of Life, attributed to Phillip Spigle, Henkel-Spigle Pottery, Botetourt County. *Private collection.*



7. Robust wide-mouthed earthenware storage jar with iron and lead glaze and characteristic applied handles, attributed to Philip Spigle, Botetourt County. *MESDA acc. 3254.2.*



8. Three-gallon lead-glazed earthenware storage jar with broad flat rim and applied handles, Obenshane pottery, Mill Creek, Botetourt County. *Private collection.*



8a. Detail of figure 8 showing the incised date "1868" and signature, "Matthew Obenshane" on the vessel's base.





9. One-gallon ovoid salt-glazed stoneware storage jar with brushed cobalt eagle, attributed to James River basin, c. 1830–60. *Private collection.*



10. Three-gallon salt-glazed stoneware jug with extruded vertical handle and bold brushed cobalt owl, attributed to James River basin, c. 1830–60. *Private collection.*



11. Two-gallon salt-glazed stoneware pitcher with brushed cobalt decoration, including a wreath encircling the date "1835," attributed to the James River basin. *Private collection.*

including an eagle (fig. 9), an owl (fig. 10), and a rabbit; three have been seen with crudely incised decoration absent blue cobalt showing a fish or serpent, an upside-down clipper ship, and a heart.

#### *Rockbridge County Potters*

Ten potters have been identified as working at three potteries in Rockbridge County between 1785 and 1880 (table 3).<sup>36</sup> The earliest of these is Benjamin Darst's pottery operation in Lexington, which began in 1785. Darst's pottery prospered, and in 1788, John Grigsby and David Cloyd, overseers of the poor for Rockbridge County, bound out an apprentice, one Francis Garner, to Darst to learn the "Art and Trade" of a potter. The indenture, dated 18 June 1788 (Rockbridge County Will Book #1, p. 319), obligated Darst not only to teach his sixteen-year-old apprentice pottery skills, but also to



12. Two elongated semi-ovoid salt-glazed stoneware jars with characteristic rolled rim, turned ear-like handles, brushed cobalt floral motifs, and "ROCKBRIDGE" stamp attributed to the Rockbridge Baths pottery, c. 1840–82. *Private collection.*

"teach him or cause him to be taught to Read & Write and also the five Common Rules of Arithmetic" and to "find him in sufficient Meat, drink, Lodging, Washing & apparel." This remarkable document further orders that, when "the time is Expired" (1793), Garner must be given "a Turning Lathe & five pounds Cash & two Suits of Clothing, one of which shall be new." Darst closed his pottery in 1791 in favor of pursuing brickmaking and house building.<sup>37</sup>

The other two Rockbridge potteries have been excavated. The Rockbridge Baths Pottery site (44RB84) was identified and intensively investigated in 1985.<sup>38</sup> The pottery operated from ca. 1840 until ca. 1882 and consisted of a circular updraft kiln, a potter's shed, and a clay processing/storage area.<sup>39</sup> Both salt-glazed stoneware and lead-glazed earthenware were produced in a variety of forms, including churns, storage jars (fig. 12), jugs (fig. 13), milk pans, and bowls, with



13. Ovoid three-gallon salt-glazed stoneware jug with extruded handle, ringed or incised neck, and cobalt incised floral decoration attributed to John Morgan, the Firebaugh Pottery, c. 1830–50. *Private collection.* The characteristic figure-eight stroke used to incise the rounded petals of the floral design is virtually identical to that used to decorate the cooler in figure 14.

the vessel shape typically being ovoid. Decorative treatments included both incised and brushed or slipped blue cobalt floral, geometric, and animal motifs.<sup>40</sup> The “Rockbridge” mark was observed on several wasters. Anthropomorphic, reed-stem pipes were also made at the pottery.

Archaeological investigations were also conducted at the Firebaugh pottery, located near Bustleburg, in spring 1988. This pottery was established by John S. Morgan in association with John Firebaugh during the first quarter of the nineteenth century. An oval updraft kiln with two fireboxes and thirteen arches separating the firing and pot chambers was identified. Recovered artifacts include kiln furniture, lead-glazed earthenware, and salt-glazed stoneware sherds like those from the Rockbridge Baths Pottery. The “ROCKBRIDGE” maker’s mark is observed on several sherds, indicating



14. Salt-glazed stoneware water cooler with vertical bilateral strap handles and cobalt incised floral decoration attributed to John Morgan, the Bustleburg-Firebaugh pottery. *Rockbridge Historical Society*.

that this site was associated historically with the Rockbridge Baths Pottery, which is located approximately four miles to the west.

Morgan's association with the Commeraw pottery in New York prior to coming to Rockbridge provides an explanation for the unique vessel forms and decorative treatments observed in the Firebaugh assemblage which otherwise are virtually indistinguishable from those produced at the Rockbridge Baths Pottery.<sup>11</sup> The presence of the "ROCKBRIDGE" mark on sherds from both sites provides additional evidence for their historical association and Morgan's involvement with both potteries (figs. 14, 15, 16). The wares manufactured in Rockbridge clearly show the pervasive influence of the Germanic salt-glazed stoneware tradition in which Morgan was trained.<sup>12</sup>

15. One-gallon salt-glazed stoneware jug with ringed neck, extruded handle, cobalt floral decoration, and "ROCKBRIDGE" stamp attributed to John Morgan, c. 1830–50. *Private collection.*



16. One-gallon salt-glazed stoneware pitcher with incised and cobalt decorated eagle and inscription, "Rockbridge Va April the 24th 1838." The naive but elaborately detailed incised eagle with wings spread exhibits a shield across its breast, fig leaves and arrows in its talons, and a snake in its beak. Attributed to John Morgan, the Firebaugh Pottery, Rockbridge County, 1838. *Private collection.* Compare this with a similar example illustrated in Comstock (1994; Fig. 6.7, p. 319).



### *Augusta County Potters*

In Augusta County, at least seven potteries, including one mid-nineteenth-century earthenware kiln site and 19 nineteenth-century potters, have been identified, indicating that this was an important pottery region (table 4).<sup>43</sup>

Unlike the other counties studied, the pottery sites of Augusta County are not clustered around one or more locales, but are dispersed across the county. This area saw the production of both stoneware and earthenware during the period from 1840 through 1870. Limited salvage excavations were conducted at the Grimm earthenware pottery,<sup>44</sup> resulting in the attribution of several extant vessels to this site (fig. 17). The manufacture of pottery in Augusta County is unusual in respect to the paucity of extant signed or marked wares and, hence, is poorly understood.



17. Two small-mouthed elongated lead-glazed earthenware storage jars with earlike handles and a flat broad rim, attributed to the Grimm pottery, Augusta County, 1840–60. *Private collection.*



18. Five salt-glazed stoneware vessels attributed to John Heatwole, Rockingham County, Virginia, c. 1851–80. From left to right: two-gallon wide-mouthed jar with brushed cobalt bluebells and date "185-"; one-gallon salt-glazed pitcher with manganese floral decoration and date "1865"; small-mouthed preserve jar with cobalt floral spray and date "1853"; tall wide-mouthed churn with cobalt bird and date "1869"; three-gallon salt-glazed wide-mouthed crock with date "1866" and cobalt decoration. *Private collection.*

### *Rockingham County Potters*

The largest pottery center within the area being examined was in Rockingham County; 53 potters worked in the industry at over twelve potteries, forming two clusters, one in the eastern part of the county and the other along the county's western side (table 5).<sup>45</sup> The vast majority of the potters in both areas were either descendants of Andrew Coffman or had worked in one of the three Coffman potteries. The eastern group of potters included the Coffmans (Andrew



and his sons, William C., William S., Edward, Robert, and John) and several neighbors in the Elkton area as well as a number of primarily journeyman potters including Iteland, Ducey and Shinnick who were working in the Mt. Crawford area. Western Rockingham potters were clustered along the Dry River and were largely products of the Coffman shops.<sup>46</sup> Of these western Rockingham potters, Emmanuel Suter developed an extensive operation and continued to produce wares into the twentieth century.<sup>47</sup> John Heatwole was also very productive (fig. 18). Excavations were undertaken at the Morris kiln, a circular downdraft kiln that produced predominately stoneware, which was in operation during the third quarter of the nineteenth century.<sup>48</sup>

Together this archaeology of pottery manufacturing documents that the industry was fairly homogeneous across the state, being generally conservative and slow to change with respect to manufacturing technologies, specifically kiln type and the range of forms produced. The distribution of potteries is also quite regular and explainable in terms of proximity to population centers, raw material resources and those factors outlined earlier. Despite these regularities, the influence of the tradition in which the potter was trained is recognizable, as are distinctive changes accompanying the transition from earthenware to stoneware production and those associated with industrialization.<sup>49</sup>

#### FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

##### *Pottery Attributes*

In order to realize the full research potential of western Virginia pottery both in terms of how it provides for understanding the industry and for its interpretive value from an archaeological perspective, it is critical that vessel attributes (including maker's marks, capacity stamps, and unique aspects of vessel form, paste, glaze, manufacturing techniques, and decoration) be properly identified and recorded. In this way we will be able to identify and attribute

unsigned extant wares, assess the chronological significance of wares from archaeological contexts, and understand the regional significance and distribution individual ware types.<sup>50</sup>

#### *Pottery Assemblages at Domestic Sites*

In addition to providing basic chronological information, other relevant areas of interpretation include changing patterns of pottery consumption. One hypothesis to be tested states that there is a decreasing dependence on stonewares and earthenwares after 1870 as the result of the market availability of a wide range of alternative containers. The properly recorded attribute data for these wares from archaeological contexts will also allow us to understand when, how quickly and to what degree stonewares replaced earthenwares, the variation in the percentages of European and American coarsewares through time and across space, the extent to which locally manufactured wares were purchased for markets outside the region, and so forth.<sup>51</sup>

#### *Text and The Archaeology of Virginia Pottery*

One primary area of current research concerns the exploration of text to better understand the industry. Current research that involves assessing potter's ledgers which detail pottery prices through time suggests that the types and percentages of pottery wares at archaeological sites have significant potential for contributing to assessments of socio-economic status. Preliminary work with the Zigler ledgers, which detail sales of wares from their pottery in Timberville, Rockingham County, documents variation in costs of earthenware and stoneware and of different vessel types within both ware categories and shows how these cost relationships change through time. This basic data regarding what wares were available and how much they cost is essential for valid economic and social interpretation of ceramics.<sup>52</sup> The lack of exploration of this type of information illustrates both the need for more research of the American ceramic market and the tenuousness with which we currently understand it.

Equally important information provided by the ledgers is the potter's definition of ware types and their intended functions. The ledgers further reveal the names of potters employed by the pottery; provide information about the wages earned and time involved in producing pots, hauling clay, and cutting timber; and show to whom wares were sold and how they were distributed.<sup>53</sup>

Exploring text to understand how traditional potters negotiated the impact of industrialization on the industry is the subject of ongoing research by Paul Mullins.<sup>54</sup> His work concerns interpretation of the diaries, ledgers and other documentary materials from the Suter pottery in Rockingham County. Here one Emanuel Suter operated a traditional farm pottery during the 1850s using handcraft technologies and exchanging wares in local barter networks. After the Civil War, he successfully incorporated certain industrial aspects of both mechanized mass production and organizational strategy, so as to continue his enterprise in an expanding capitalist economy for the rest of the nineteenth century. This was an "accomplishment" few traditional potters were able to achieve.

#### SUMMARY

With the exception of the transplanted English earthenware tradition in the Tidewater during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Virginia pottery industry is dominated by wares strongly influenced by the Germanic pottery tradition. This largely stoneware tradition is most pronounced in the ridge-and-valley region of the state, where suitable local resources and population centers supported well over 230 nineteenth-century potters.

The history of the traditional pottery manufacturing industry in western Virginia, including the counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Rockbridge, Augusta, and Rockingham, begins with the establishment of the Darst pottery in Rockbridge County in 1785. The few potters working in Rockingham County at the beginning of the nineteenth century set the stage for this area's domination of pottery

production in western Virginia throughout the century. Although there is no historical or archaeological evidence of the pottery industry within the other four counties region until the second quarter of the nineteenth century, it is likely that individuals were engaged in the manufacture of pottery on a part-time basis, in small shops, with their primary occupation being that of farming.

By the 1830s the Morgan-Firebaugh pottery was producing both earthenware and stoneware in Rockbridge County and the Hinkle pottery was producing earthenware in Botetourt County. The last half of the nineteenth century was characterized by a proliferation of the stoneware industry in Rockingham County involving the Coffmans, their descendants, and those trained by them, and in Alleghany County involving Fulton, Waddell and the Browns. It was further characterized by an increase in the production of earthenware in Botetourt evidenced by the involvement of Hinkle, Spigle, the Obenchains and Nofzingers, as well as in Augusta by the Grimms and similar family-oriented operations. Also significant is the continuation of the predominately stoneware pottery tradition by Morgan and others in Rockbridge. While the Rockbridge Bath area became a center for pottery manufacture in Rockbridge, with a number of potters living and working in the area, for most of the nineteenth century, the Fincastle-Amsterdam District and Potts Creek area became focal points for the industry in Botetourt and Alleghany Counties, respectively. In Rockingham County, the Elkton and Dry River areas are recognizable as pottery centers, but in Augusta County the patterning of pottery locales is inconsistent with that of the other counties, being characterized by a dispersed distribution of sites across the county.

The last quarter of the nineteenth century saw many potteries in the rural areas of western Virginia cease operation. With the closing of Fulton's Alleghany pottery (44AY184) around 1875, the Obenshane pottery in Botetourt County, around 1880, and the Rockbridge Baths Pottery (44RB84) circa 1882, the traditional pottery manufacturing industry ceased to exist in western Virginia. The in-

dustrialized and much transformed industry in Rockingham, however, continued into the first decade of the twentieth century (until 1905 at Coffman's Elkton West pottery).<sup>55</sup> As a result of increasing industrialization that on the one hand, was difficult for these traditional potters to negotiate, and on the other provided alternative, and perhaps preferred, storage containers, the manufacture of traditional domestic ceramic wares was, by this time, no longer economically feasible.<sup>56</sup>

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#### NOTES

1. Jeffrey P. Blomster and Kurt C. Russ, "Early Pottery Production in Eastern Virginia: An Examination of Its Extent and Development" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Historical Archaeology, Richmond, Va., January 1991), 12–13. As many as eight seventeenth- and eighteenth-century endeavors have been identified in the Tidewater area of Virginia; see Beverly Straube, "The Colonial Potters of Tidewater Virginia," in this *Journal*.
2. Norman Barka and Christine Sheridan, "The Yorktown Pottery Industry, Yorktown, Virginia." Also Norman Barka, Edward Ayers, and Christine Sheridan, *The "Poor Potter" of Yorktown*, vol. 3, *Ceramics*, Yorktown Research Series no. 5 (Williamsburg, Va.: College of William & Mary, 1984).
3. Beth A. Bower, "The Pottery-Making Trade in Colonial Philadelphia: The Growth of an Early Urban Industry," in *Domestic Pottery of the Northeastern United States, 1625–1850*, ed. S.P. Turnbaugh (New York: Academic Press, 1985), 276; Barka and Sheridan, "The Yorktown Pottery Industry," 21.
4. Kurt C. Russ (1990a), "The Traditional Pottery Manufacturing Industry in Virginia: Examples from Botetourt and Rockbridge Counties," *Rockbridge Historical Society Proceedings X*, (Lexington, Va.: Rockbridge Historical Society, 1990), 455–56.
5. H. E. Comstock, introduction to William E. Wiltshire, *The Folk Pottery of the Shenandoah Valley*, (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1975), 19. This Winchester pottery operation continued from 1824 until 1845. It was not until 1832 that Peter Bell manufactured stoneware.
6. Samuel Bell was the first to move to Strasburg in 1833 when he purchased the old Beyer Pottery. He continued to be actively engaged in the business until 1853. It was not until 1837 that Solomon Bell came to participate in his brother's pottery. He soon dominated the pottery production end of the business, with which he continued to be involved until his death in 1882. Solomon's sons, Richard Franklin (Polk) Bell and Charles Forrest Bell, continued the Bell family pottery until 1908.
7. J. Roderick Moore, "Earthenware Potters along the Great Road in Virginia and Tennessee," *Antiques* 124, no. 3 (1983), 528–37.

8. Kurt C. Russ (1989), "The Fincastle Pottery (44BO304): Salvage Excavations at a Nineteenth-Century Earthenware Kiln in Botetourt County, Virginia." Washington and Lee University Laboratory of Anthropology, *Occasional Papers in Anthropology* 28 (May 1989); Russ (1990a); Russ (1990b), "The Nineteenth-Century Traditional Pottery Manufacturing Industry in Botetourt County, Virginia" (paper presented to the Roanoke Historical Society, Roanoke, Va., March 1990); and Russ (1991a), "The Zigler-Coffman Pottery Located in Timberville, Rockingham County, Virginia" (manuscript on file at Washington and Lee University Laboratory of Anthropology, Lexington, Va.), 1991.

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TABLE 1. *Potters working in Alleghany County, Virginia, during the nineteenth century*

<i>Specific location within the county</i>	<i>Potter</i>	<i>Approximate dates of operation</i>
First District Boiling Springs District	George N. Fulton (b. 1835–d. 1894)	ca. 1867–1880
	Thomas R. Waddell (b. ca. 1810)	ca. 1850–1870
	John Brown (b. 1801 in MD)	ca. 1850
	Gustavus A. Brown (b. 1834 in VA)	ca. 1850
	John W. Brown (b. 1834 in VA)	ca. 1850

TABLE 2. *Potters working in Botetourt County, Virginia, during the nineteenth century*

<i>Specific location within the county</i>	<i>Potter</i>	<i>Approximate dates of operation</i>
Fincastle/Amsterdam District/ Western District #8	Edward Dunbar (b. c. 1835)	ca. 1850
	George N. Fulton (b. 1835–d. 1894)	ca. 1875–1894
	Robert Fulwiler (b. 22 July 1825– d. 17 June 1908)	ca. 1850
	Joshua Hill (b. c. 1790)	ca. 1850
	Joseph (Jesse) Henkel (Hinkle) (b. c. 1796 in MD)	ca. 1830–1850
	Joel Nofzinger (b. 11 Feb. 1812– d. 3 Oct. 1857)	ca. 1850
	Matthias Nofzinger	ca. 1850
	William Obenchain (Obenshane) (b. 1804)	ca. 1860–1880
	Peter Obenchain (b. 1828)	ca. 1860–1880
	Peter M. Obenchain (b. 1817)	ca. 1850–1880
Philip Spigle (b. 9 Nov. 1828– d. 16 Feb. 1880)	ca. 1850–1880	

TABLE 3. *Historic Potters working in Rockbridge County, Virginia*

<i>Specific location within the county</i>	<i>Potter</i>	<i>Dates of operation</i>
Rockbridge Baths	Isaac D. Lam (b. 14 Jan. 1832–d. 22 July 1882) mark: “Rockbridge”	c. 1864–1880
	John D. Campbell (b. 1802)	c. 1840–1860
	James H. (b. 1834) & Charles Campbell (b. 1832)	c. 1850–1860
	W.P. Harris (worked with Lam)	c. 1875
	Henry Morgan	c. 1840
Lexington	Bejamin Darst, Sr. (b. 19 Jan. 1760–d. 6 Oct. 1835)	c. 1785–1791
	Francis Garner (apprentice to Darst)	c. 1785–1791
Bustleburg	John Firebaugh (b. 14 March 1789 in Pa.–d. 13 July 1867)	c. 1830–1867
	Robert T. Fullweider (Fulwiler) (b. 22 July 1825–d. 17 June 1908)	1860–1880
	Henry Morgan	c. 1830
	John S. (or D.) Morgan (b. 1768 in NY)	c. 1830–1850

TABLE 4. *Historic potters working in Augusta County, Virginia*

<i>Specific location within the county</i>	<i>Potter</i>	<i>Approximate dates of operation</i>
Riverheads District	Christian Grimm	c. 1840
	Jacob Grimm	c. 1840–1850
First District	Phillip Grimm	c. 1860
	David Grimm (b. 1812)	c. 1850–1860
Specific location unknown	Samuel Lutz (b. 1822 in PA)	c. 1850
	Bayler Lutz	c. 1850
North Subdivision	Wm. Shumate & Company (2 anonymous potters employed)	c. 1870
	Charles W. Bunsfelt (b. 1830 in Prussia)	c. 1870
Dooms	Edward Walter (b. 1823 in Prussia)	
Burkes Mill/North Subdivision	Conrad Wilson (b. 1800 in Md.)	c. 1850
	J. W. Watson (b. 1825 in Md.)	c. 1850–1860
	Samuel Watson (b. 1827 in Md.)	c. 1850–1860
	Lindsay Morris (b. 1821)	c. 1860
Crimora Area	Walter's Pottery	c. 1870
Mt. Solon	D. Coffman	?
New Hope	?	
Staunton	I. H. Plecker (stencilled mark)	c. 1880
	Lipscomb and Somerville (stencilled mark)	?
	Michael Puffenberger (Puffenbarger)	?
	—Buck (husband of Catherine Buck)	?

TABLE 5. *Historic potters working in Rockingham County, Virginia*

<i>Specific location within the county</i>	<i>Potter</i>	<i>Approximate dates of operation</i>
East Elkton	John Stephen Conrad, Jr. (b. 26 Feb. 1749-d. 28 Aug. 1822)	c. 1800-1822
	Andrew Coffman (b. 22 July 1795-d. 10 May 1853)	c. 1819-1822
East Elkton (Whip-poor-will Springs)	Andrew Coffman	c. 1820-1853
	William Carlton Coffman (Andrew's son; b. 1822-d. 1899)	c. 1835-1850
	John Coffman (Andrew's son; b. 11 May 1824-d. 12 Oct. 1899)	c. 1840-1855
	Andrew Carlton Coffman (Andrew's son; b. 4 Nov. 1833)	c. 1845-1860
	Reuben Samuel Coffman (Andrew's son; b. 1836-d. 1900)	c. 1850
	Daniel A. Coffman (Andrew's son; b. 29 Nov. 1839)	c. 1850
	David Coffman (b. 1829; Andrew's nephew)	c. 1850
	Isaac Lam (b. 14 Jan. 1832-d. 22 July 1882)	c. 1850
	Joseph H. Kite (b. 1828-d. 1889)	c. 1850
	John Stephen Conrad, Jr. (b. 1749-d. 1822)	c. 1820
	Lindsay Morris (b. 1820-d. 1902) (Andrew's son-in-law)	c. 1845-1853
	John Heatwole (b. 1826-d. 1907) (Andrew's son-in-law)	c. 1845-1850
Harrisonburg (Black's Run and German Street)	George Kline	c. 1800-1830(?)
Elkton North (“Willow Springs”)	William C. Coffman (b. 22 Aug. 1822-d. 8 June 1896)	c. 1850-1899
	Edwin E. Coffman (b. 24 Sep. 1853-d. 5 Oct. 1919; William's son)	c. 1870-1892
	William S. Coffman (b. 9 May 1846-d. 2 June 1912; William's son)	c. 1865-1870s
	Robert A. Coffman (b. 9 Aug. 1855-d. 11 Nov. 1921; William's son)	c. 1870-1882
	Isaac Lam (b. 1832-d. 1882)	c. 1850s

TABLE 5. *continued*

<i>Specific location within the county</i>	<i>Potter</i>	<i>Approximate dates of operation</i>
North Harrisonburg	Joseph Kite (b. 1828–d. 1889)	c. 1850s
	Thomas Logan (b. 1791 in Ireland)	c. 1840–1850s
	Thomas G. Logan (b. 1820; Thomas' son)	c. 1840–1860s
	Neville Logan (Thomas's son)	c. 1850–1870s
	Abram Spencer (b. c. 1812)	c. 1860
Dry River North	Jacob Rimel	c. 1870
	John Heatwole (b. 18 Aug. 1826–d. 16 June 1907)	c. 1850–1861 c. 1865–1892
	Lindsay Morris (b. 1820–d. 1902)	c. 1845–1850
	Alfred N. Powell (b. 1834)	c. 1850
	Reuben S. Coffman (b. 1836–d. 1900; John's brother-in-law)	c. 1860
	Daniel A. Coffman (b. 1839; John's brother-in-law)	c. 1860
	Joseph Silber (b. 1830–d. 1899)	c. 6/1865–7/1866
	John W. Ford (b. 17 Mar. 1850–d. 28 Mar. 1925; John's son-in-law)	c. 1870–1880
	Andrew D. Heatwole (b. 1853; John's son)	c. 1880s
	Emmanuel Suter (b. 1833–d. 1902; John's cousin)	c. 1851–1855
Specific location unknown	Mathias Bright (b. 1798 in Germany)	c. 1850
Riverton	Joseph Hiram Kite (b. 1828–d. 1889)	c. 1866–1889
	William C. Coffman (b. 1822–d. 1899)	c. 1866–1889 (?)
	William S. Coffman (b. 1846–d. 1912)	c. 1866–1889 (?)

TABLE 5. *continued*

<i>Specific location within the county</i>	<i>Potter</i>	<i>Approximate dates of operation</i>
	Thomas Kite (b. 1855; Joseph's son)	c. 1870–1880
Mt. Crawford	Lindsay Morris (b. 1820–d. 1902)	c. 1866–1872
	Erasmus Morris (b. 1846–d. 1932; Lindsay's son)	c. 1866–1872
	Andrew Jackson Morris (b. 6 Oct. 1853–d. 16 May 1888; Lindsay's son)	c. 1870–1872
	Reuben Samuel Coffman (b. 29 May 1836–d. 1 Oct. 1900; Lindsay's brother-in-law)	c. 1866–1872
Dry River South	Reuben Samuel Coffman	c. 1872–1890s
	Lindsay Morris (b. 1820–d. 1902)	c. 1872–1890s
	Erasmus Morris	c. 1872–1890s
	Andrew Jackson Morris	c. 1972–1890
Rawley Springs	Joseph Silber (b. 26 Mar. 1930, Baden, Germany–d. 14 Dec. 1890)	c. 1875–1890
Franklin Township (Mt. Crawford)	Joseph Silber (b. 26 Mar. 1830 Baden, Germany– d. 14 Dec. 1890)	c. 1867–1874
	George M. Woods (b. 1822)	c. 1867–1874
	Mathew/Matthias Ireland (b. 1828)	c. 1870s
	George Ducey (b. 1832, PA)	c. 1870s
	James Shinnick (b. 1813, Maryland)	c. 1870–1880s
Elkton West (Ricketsville Farm)	William S. Coffman (b. 9 May 1846–d. 2 June 1912; son of William C. Coffman)	c. 1882–1905
	Robert A. Coffman (b. 9 Aug. 1855–d. 11 Nov. 1921; William's brother)	c. 1882–1905
	Edward E. Coffman (b. 24 Sep. 1853–d. 5 Oct. 1919; William's brother)	c. 1882–1888

TABLE 5, *continued*

<i>Specific location within the county</i>	<i>Potter</i>	<i>Approximate dates of operation</i>
	Clinton Coffman (b. 18 <sup>th</sup> —d. 1963; son of William)	c. 1890–1905
General District and Mt. Clinton	Emmanuel Suter (b. 26 Mar 1833—d. 16 Dec. 1902)	c. 1851–1864
	John Heatwole (b. 1826—d. 1907)	c. 1851–1855
Mt. Clinton/ New Erection Pottery	Emmanuel Suter	c. 11/1866–8/7/1890
	John Heatwole	1886–1890
	Isaac Good (b. 27 Feb. 1851—d. 8 Feb. 1907; John Good's son)	c. 1866–1890
	John W. Ford (b. 7 March 1850—d. 28 March 1925)	c. 1890
	Reuben Suter (b. 16 April 1888; E. Suter's son)	c. 1875–1890
	Peter Swope Suter (b. 7 Sep 1871; E. Suter's son)	c. 1890
	Emmanuel J. Suter (b. 22 Feb 1868; E. Suter's son)	c. 1885–1890
	John P. Good (b. 1819—d. 1879)	c. 1866–1870s
	John R. Suter (b. 24 Feb 1863; E. Suter's son)	c. 1880–1890
	Joseph Silber (b. 1830—d. 1890)	c. 1875–1875
	Andrew Heatwole (b. 1853)	c. 1874
	William and J. Ricketts	c. 1870?
	John F. Good (b. 1853; John P. Good's son)	c. 1875
Steaven Benjiman Briger	c. 1879	
Harrisonburg/ Harrisonburg Steam Pottery	Emmanuel Suter (b. 1833—d. 1902)	c. 1891–1897
	Reuben Suter (b. 1888)	c. 1891–1897
	Emmanuel J. Suter (b. 1868)	c. 1891–1897

TABLE 5. *continued*

<i>Specific location within the county</i>	<i>Potter</i>	<i>Approximate dates of operation</i>
	John R. Suter (b. 1863)	c. 1891–1897
	Isaac Good (b. 1851–d. 1907)	c. 1891
Specific location unknown (Area now in Pendleton Co., West Virginia)	John Fisher	c. 1794 or 7(?)
Timberville	John Zigler	c. 1830 (?)
	Andrew Coffman	c. 1830 (?)
	Isaac Good (b. 1851–d. 1907)	c. 1873–1874
	Branson O’Roarke (b. 1812)	c. 1850–1870



## Research Note

### The Martin's Hundred Potter: English North America's Earliest Known Master of His Trade

MARTHA W. MCCARTNEY<sup>1</sup>

ON MAY 20, 1625, Thomas Ward of Martin's Hundred in Virginia signed a letter, identifying himself as a "pottmaker."<sup>2</sup> That solitary act, and the archaeological evidence for early pot-making at the James River plantation known as Martin's Hundred, earned Ward a singular place in history as the earliest identifiable practitioner of his trade in English North America.

#### ARRIVAL IN THE COLONY

In 1619 the forty-one-year-old Ward set sail from England aboard the *Warwick* with a dozen or so others whom the Society of Martin's Hundred had sent to Virginia.<sup>3</sup> One of his shipmates was a bricklayer named John Jackson, to whom he was indentured.<sup>4</sup> The two men were among the 266 people the Society dispatched to the colony during 1618–19 to establish a plantation upon the land they had been assigned. When the would-be settlers arrived in Virginia, Deputy-Governor Samuel Argoll<sup>5</sup> seated them in Pasbehay, just west of Jamestown Island, instead of sending them several miles downstream to the Society of Martin's Hundred land (fig. 1). Argoll, wittingly or not, overlooked the fact that the acreage upon which he placed the Martin's Hundred people was property that Virginia

1. John Farrar, *A map of Virginia discovered to ye Hills, and in it's Latit: From 35 deg: & 12 near Florida, to 41 deg: bounds of new England*. Ludgate, England, 1651. This map shows the location of Martin's Hundred and Jamestown in the early seventeenth century. *Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University.*



Company officials tentatively had reserved for each incumbent governor's use.<sup>6</sup>

In January 1620 John Rolfe reported that the Martin's Hundred people, who still were residing upon what officially had become the Governor's Land, were in good health and had "reaped good crops." By March they had gone forth to the vast tract that had been set aside for the Society of Martin's Hundred.<sup>8</sup> The community they established was called Wolstenholme Town, which took its

name from that of Sir John Wolstenholme, one of the Society's principal investors and an officer of the Virginia Company of London."

THOMAS WARD AND LIFE AT  
MARTIN'S HUNDRED

During 1620 and 1621, the Martin's Hundred colonists took in fourteen newcomers the Society's investors sent over in the *Marmaduke* and the *Francis Bonaventure*.<sup>10</sup> One of them was William Harwood, the leader or "governor" of Martin's Hundred, who arrived in August 1620.<sup>11</sup> Another was the twenty-year-old sister of Thomas Ward's master, John Jackson, one of the marriageable young women the Virginia Company sent to the colony in 1621.<sup>12</sup> According to census records compiled during 1621–22, Martin's Hundred had seventy-two inhabitants: forty-five men, fourteen women and thirteen children.<sup>13</sup> In January 1622 the residents of Martin's Hundred reportedly were weakened by sickness and malnutrition, problems surely exacerbated by the arrival of new settlers needing food and shelter and probably carrying infectious diseases.<sup>14</sup>

The Society of Martin's Hundred's official correspondence reveals that its investors made ambitious plans for their plantation's development. They transported tenants to the colony, who were to work as sharecroppers for five or six years before receiving twenty-five acres of their own.<sup>15</sup> They also sent indentured servants whose contracts ranged from five to seven years, and a dozen or more boys to serve as apprentices to skilled workers.<sup>16</sup> The Society of Martin's Hundred's investors, like those of the Virginia Company, hoped to reap a substantial profit from their plantation through the production of marketable commodities that could be sent abroad. They also intended for those with special skills to produce goods and services that would meet local needs.<sup>17</sup> Among the specialized workers the Society of Martin's Hundred purposefully dispatched to its plantation were men adept in iron-making, blacksmithing, carpentry, coopering, shipbuilding and other trades.<sup>18</sup> Thus, skilled artisans like

potter Thomas Ward and bricklayer John Jackson would have been considered important contributors to the community.<sup>19</sup>

But fate intruded upon the Society of Martin's Hundred's carefully laid plans. On Friday, March 22, 1622, when the Indians of the Powhatan Chiefdom made a concerted effort to drive the colonists from their soil, Martin's Hundred was one of the settlements hardest hit.<sup>20</sup> Among the seventy-three men, women, and children reported as slain were four male servants in the household of Thomas Ward's master, John Jackson. During the melee at Martin's Hundred, nineteen women were captured by the Indians, who took them to a village on the Pamunkey River.<sup>21</sup> The minutes of the General Court suggest that John Jackson's sister, Ann, who had arrived in the colony only months before the massacre, was one of the females the Indians seized.<sup>22</sup> It is uncertain whether Jackson's wife (also named Ann) suffered the same fate. One man claimed that after the Indian attack, only two houses "and a peece of a church" were left at Martin's Hundred.<sup>23</sup> Miraculously, Thomas Ward survived.

In the wake of the 1622 Indian uprising, the Martin's Hundred settlers were evacuated to Jamestown Island where they remained for nearly a year.<sup>24</sup> When they returned to their plantation early in 1623, living conditions were bleak and fraught with danger. On March 20, Richard Frethorne, an indentured servant, wrote to his parents, begging them to send food and clothing, for he was starving and clad in rags. He also asked them to ship consumables that he could barter or sell at a profit. He said that all but three of the twenty servants in his group had perished and that only thirty-two people were then living at Martin's Hundred.<sup>25</sup> He claimed that his master, Mr. Harwood, forced his servants to work from dawn to dusk, subsisting on water, gruel, and a little bread, and threatened to turn them out into the woods to fend for themselves if supplies ran out. Thomas Nicholls, a surveyor sent to Martin's Hundred, also spoke of the community's meager rations and recommended that no more women be sent over, for they ate too much and worked too little.<sup>26</sup>

In February 1624, when a census was made of the Virginia colony's

inhabitants, twenty-four people were residing at Martin's Hundred and Thomas Ward was a member of John Jackson's household. Also present were John Stephens and Jackson's wife, Ann. A year later, when a muster was made of the colony's communities, there were twenty-nine people at Martin's Hundred, excluding four who had died since the previous tabulation. John Jackson still headed a household that included his wife, their twenty-week-old child, and two indentured servants, forty-seven-year-old Thomas Ward and thirty-five-year-old John Stephens. "A girl of Mr. Jacksons," perhaps a maid servant, reportedly had died since February 1624. All of the adults in the Jackson household in February 1625 had come to Virginia aboard the *Warwick* in 1619. They shared one house and in comparison with their neighbors, were relatively well provisioned and prepared to defend themselves.<sup>27</sup>

But despite the Jackson household's relatively ample cache of military equipment and preserved food, living conditions in Martin's Hundred were stark, for the plantation's leader, William Harwood, had a well-earned reputation for hoarding the provisions and other supplies the Society of Martin's Hundred sent to its colonists.<sup>28</sup> Some local residents alleged that he sold the goods he stashed, sometimes bestowing them upon friends and favorites to bolster his influence.<sup>29</sup>

William Harwood's greed impelled Martin's Hundred potter Thomas Ward to write his May 20, 1625, letter to Nicholas Ferrar, treasurer of the Society and a principal officer in the Virginia Company. The document was co-signed by bricklayer John Jackson. Ward claimed that he and Jackson were unable to subsist on what remained of their crops after the Society and William Harwood took their share.<sup>30</sup> Moreover, the price of corn and other essentials was so high that they were obliged to go into debt for what they needed to survive. He reminded Ferrar of his promise to provide each tenant with "two servants a man and the milke of some cowse to helpe us," pointing out that "we find no such matter here." Ward added that there was "not soe much as a toole to work with but what we buy oursellvees<sup>31</sup> nor powder nor shot to garde our lyves." He said that

with this from your loving and true friends  
a copy of his majesty's most honorable  
his pleasure may please your answer & be  
we should not have felt you know  
to to know what's intended to do with us  
so our friends will rejoice upon it  
writing you in love from our friends  
25<sup>th</sup> of may anno domini 1620

Your slaves in Virginia  
— Tho Ward pottmaker  
— John Jack in Bricklayer

2. The signature of the Martin's Hundred potter Thomas Ward as it appears on his May 20, 1625, letter to Nicholas Ferrar. *Ferrar Manuscript 500*, Pepys Library, Magdalene College, Cambridge University.

their ground was “in such a place that we can but one of us worke for the other of us must gard or else wee shall be in danger to be killed off.” Moreover, their clothes and shoes were worn out and they had no means of replacing them. Ward closed his letter by asserting that “we will not indure this kind of living any longer,” and he added that he and Jackson had prepared a petition their friends were going to submit to the king’s council if something was not done to remedy matters. Signing their letter “Your slaves in Virginia,” Thomas Ward identified himself as a “pottmaker” and John Jackson, as a bricklayer (fig. 2).<sup>12</sup> The two men’s complaints were corroborated by Robert Adams’ letter to John and Robert Ferrar, in which he accused the miserly William Harwood of refusing to provide Martin’s Hundred’s inhabitants with the necessities and the ammunition they needed to fend off hostile Indians.<sup>13</sup>

The names of Thomas Ward, John Jackson, and John Stephens appeared in the minutes of the colony’s General Court several times

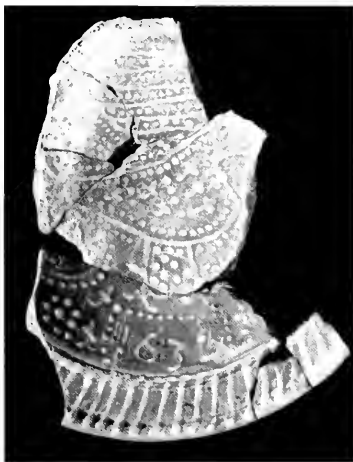
during the mid- to late 1620s. By then, Virginia had become a crown colony and the Society of Martin's Hundred, whose financial problems mimicked those of the defunct Virginia Company, had faded into extinction. Even so, Thomas Ward stayed on at Martin's Hundred. On January 12, 1627, he testified before the General Court that while working in the woods he overheard two neighbors say that certain members of the Council of State were unfit for office.<sup>34</sup> He was still at Martin's Hundred on January 20, 1633/34, when he witnessed the signing of a neighbor's will.<sup>35</sup> It is uncertain how much longer the fifty-six-year-old potter managed to survive or whether he left heirs. By 1635 planters had begun to patent and seat land within the limits of the vast acreage formerly assigned to the Society of Martin's Hundred.<sup>36</sup> Ward, however, failed to claim land there or elsewhere in the colony. Thus, he may have died, chosen to rent land from another, or perhaps returned to his native England.<sup>37</sup>

#### THE MARTIN'S HUNDRED POTTER AND HIS WARES

Archaeological excavations undertaken at Martin's Hundred during the mid- to late 1970s by noted archaeologist Ivor Noël Hume led to the identification of the site of Wolstenholme Town. Adjacent to what he concluded were the remains of a fort or bawne were two adjoining palisaded yards connected by a 15-by-60-foot house. The largest of the two enclosed yards contained a 15-by-25-foot building that Noël Hume interpreted as a storehouse. Within the other was an approximately 21-by-25-foot irregularly shaped potter's pond, a shed, and a grave.<sup>38</sup> The potter's pond at Martin's Hundred contained a blunger (a tool used by potters for mixing clay) and several earthenware wasters, which Dr. Stephen Clements of the College of William and Mary's Geology Department concluded could have made from local clay (fig. 3).<sup>39</sup> An almost intact locally made bucket-shaped pot was found at the site that has a finger-impressed strap handle.<sup>40</sup> All of these vessels most likely were produced by Martin's Hundred potter Thomas Ward or apprentices working under his supervision.



3. Earthenware wasters from the potter's pond at Martin's Hundred. *Photograph courtesy of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.*



4. Slipware dish dated 1631 and made by the Martin's Hundred potter. *Photograph courtesy of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.*



Earthenware vessel fragments found in early cultural features at Jamestown bear a strong resemblance to the wares produced at Martin's Hundred.<sup>41</sup> This raises the possibility that between March 1622 and early 1623, when Wolstenholme Town's inhabitants took refuge on Jamestown Island, Thomas Ward trained another potter or produced some vessels himself. It is also possible that one or more apprentices, who studied under Ward at Martin's Hundred, set up shop at Jamestown.<sup>42</sup>

Archaeological evidence at Martin's Hundred suggests that Thomas Ward was in residence there in 1631 when he or an apprentice produced a relatively sophisticated, dated slipware dish that is decorated with a bird motif. According to Ivor Noël Hume, it was fashioned from local clay and is perhaps North America's earliest dated vessel made by a potter of European origin (fig. 4).<sup>43</sup> Thus, Thomas Ward's place in history is secured not only by the strokes of his pen but by his—or an apprentice's—artistry in clay.

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#### NOTES

1. The following people generously shared their time and expertise: Cary Carson, William E. Pittman, Susan Shames, Catherine Grosfils, and Mary Keeling of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation; David Barker of the City Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent; Leslie B. Grigsby, Richmond, Virginia, consultant; and Alain C. Outlaw of Cultural Resources, Inc. Thanks also are due James N. Haskett and Jane M. Sundberg of the National Park Service, whose cooperation made possible the publication of my research.

2. Thomas Ward and John Jackson to Mr. Ferrar, May 20, 1625, Ferrar Papers, Manuscript No. 569, Pepys Library, Cambridge University, Cambridge, England. Because Cambridge University's Magdalene College has allowed the Ferrar Papers to be filmed, these documents are now readily available to scholars. Their accessibility has been enhanced greatly by the careful work of Dr. David R. Ransome, who compiled a hand list of the microfilmed works. For convenience of reference, the Ferrar Manuscript numbers assigned during the filming process are used in the discussion that follows.

3. Susan M. Kingsbury, comp., *Records of the Virginia Company of London* (Washington, D.C., 1906–1935), III, 594; Virginia M. Meyer *et al.*, *Adventurers of Purse and Person, 1607–1624/25* (Richmond, 1987), 46. The Society comprised a group of private investors who banded together to underwrite the cost of establishing a plantation in Virginia.

4. Jackson's father, William, was a gardener in the Westminster area of London, directly across the Thames from the south bank's pottery-making district (Young Maids who came in the *Marmaduke*, August 1621, Ferrar Manuscript No. 309). It is not known whether Thomas Ward and John Jackson were acquainted before setting out for Virginia.

5. Argoll's name appears variously as Argoll and Argall in historical documents.

6. Kingsbury, *Virginia Company*, I, 350; III, 154, 594; IV, 556.

7. *Ibid.*, III, 247, 255.

8. *Ibid.*, I, 251, 273, 580, 585.

9. *Ibid.*, III, 68, 594; Society of Martin's Hundred to William Harwood, June 7, 1622, letter, Ferrar Manuscript No. 391.

10. Kingsbury, *Virginia Company*, III, 506, 594.

11. Meyer *et al.*, *Adventurers*, 45.

12. In August 1621 when Ann Jackson set sail from Portsmouth, England, aboard the *Marmaduke*, its passenger list indicated that she was bound for Martin's Hundred to join her brother, John Jackson (Young Maids, Ferrar Manuscript No. 309).

13. Anonymous, Number of People in Virginia, Ferrar Manuscript No. 138; The number of men in Virginia according to their several places of dwelling, Ferrar Manuscript No. 139; The Sum total of all ye persons, cattle, corn, arms, houses, and boats conteyned in the general muster of Virginia taken in the beginning of March 1619[120], Ferrar Manuscript No. 159.

14. Kingsbury, *Virginia Company*, I, 58<sup>n</sup>.

15. Agreement, May 18, 1622, by the associates in the Shipwrights and Henry, Earl of Southampton, Ferrar Manuscript No. 378; Apprenticeship agreement with Thomas Robinson, mason, of Waser in County of Stafford, age 29, Ferrar Manuscript No. 380. Martin's Hundred's tenants, who "worked at halffshares," were expected to return half of their annual earnings to the Society's investors.

16. Some of these youths were to serve a three-year apprenticeship followed by a four-year tenancy.

17. Several high-ranking Virginia Company officials were members of the Society of Martin's Hundred and/or the Society of Southampton Hundred. As private investors they pooled their resources to sponsor what were called "particular plantations." The Societies of Martin's Hundred and Southampton Hundred employed similar strategies of development and sometimes collaborated when sending new immigrants and supplies to the colony. Ship manifests reveal that some workers were supplied with provisions, clothing and tools. Under the law, all profits from commodities produced on particular plantations could be returned to their sponsors (Items sent to Virginia, August 1621, Ferrar Manuscript No. 308; Provisions sent for Mr. Southern and Mr. Stokes &c. in the *George* and the *Warwick*, 1621, for Southampton Hundred, Ferrar Manuscript No. 321; Items sent to Virginia, August 1621, Ferrar Manuscript No. 332; Society of Martins Hundred to Lt. Keane and Mr. Harwood of Martins Hundred, December 1621, Ferrar Manuscript No. 339; Apprenticeship agreement with Thomas Robinson, Ferrar Manuscript No. 380; Society of Martin's Hundred to Harwood, Ferrar Manuscript No. 391; Kingsbury, *Virginia Company*, III, 168).

18. Agreement, May 18, 1622, between the associates in the Shipwrights and Henry, Earl of Southampton, Ferrar Manuscript No. 378; Items furnished to Robert Mattson, Ferrar Manuscript No. 381; Funds to Nicholas Gillman, carpenter, Ferrar Manuscript No. 386; Funds to Bartholomew Blake, Ferrar Manuscript No. 390; Kingsbury, *Virginia Company*, IV, 269. They also made plans to establish a school there.

19. Governor George Yeardley's November 18, 1618, instructions from the Virginia Company authorized him to award four acres and a dwelling to any tradesman or artisan willing to

pursue his profession. In July 1621 the governor and council were ordered to compel all artisans to work at their trades and to see that they were supplied with apprentices (Kingsbury, *Virginia Company*, III, 103, 476). A quarter century later, skilled workers still were highly prized and capable of earning a good living (Peter Force, comp., *Tracts and Other Papers, Relating to the Origin, Settlement and Progress of the Colonies in North America* [Gloucester, 1963], II, 83-9; John Stirling to Mr. Ferrar, letter dated January 26, 1649/50, Ferrar Manuscript No. 1152).

20. Shortly before the massacre occurred, the Society of Martin's Hundred began making plans to expand its holdings. In December 1621 a shipment of beads and copper was used in purchasing new land from the Indians. Society of Martins Hundred to Lt. Keane, Dec. 1621, Ferrar Manuscript No. 339.

21. Kingsbury, *Virginia Company*, III, 570; IV, 232. Certain women presumed dead were among the captives. Some of them were ransomed the following spring.

22. H. R. Mellwaine, comp., *Minutes of Council and General Court of Colonial Virginia* (Richmond, 1934), 181. If not, she was taken prisoner at a later date. After Ann Jackson's release, she was entrusted to her brother's care and given permission to return to England.

23. Kingsbury, *Virginia Company*, IV, 41. Richard Frethorne, who arrived in Virginia in January 1623, on March 5 informed a Virginia Company official that 22 of the plantation's residents came through the Indian uprising (*Ibid.*, IV, 58-62).

24. Kingsbury, *Virginia Company*, III, 612-613; Mellwaine, *Minutes*, 131.

25. He said that two thirds of the 150 people from the ship that brought him to Virginia had died. He may have been aboard the *Abigail*, where "stinking beer" was blamed for many deaths and rampant infection (Kingsbury, *Virginia Company*, IV, 58-62).

26. Kingsbury, *Virginia Company*, IV, 41, 58-62, 231, 236-37. Between April 1623 and February 1624 Frethorne, Nicholls and 26 others died at Martin's Hundred. John C. Hotten, *Original Lists of Persons of Quality, 1600-1700* (Baltimore, 1980), 193.

27. They had one-and-one-half barrels of corn and eight hundred fish and were equipped with three armors, a coat of mail, four "fixed peeces" or guns, two pounds of shot, six pounds of lead and three swords (Hotten, *Original Lists*, 181-82; Meyer *et al.*, *Adventurers*, 46).

28. The abundant supply of food and military stores attributed to William Harwood during the 1625 muster supports this claim (Meyer *et al.*, *Adventurers*, 45).

29. Robert Adams to Mr. Ferrar, fragmentary letter, [1625], Ferrar Manuscript No. 572.

30. The Society was entitled to half of its tenants' yield and Harwood, to a percentage of that.

31. Emphasis added.

32. Ward *et. al* to Ferrar, May 20, 1625, Ferrar Manuscript No. 569.

33. Adams claimed that while he and another man were working their ground, the Indians attacked and he received a bullet in the leg. During the fray, his wife fled to Mr. Harwood, who reportedly locked himself in the storehouse with his guards and refused to let her in. She took refuge in a wash-house, where she hid until the attack ceased (Adams to Ferrar, [1625], Ferrar Manuscript No. 572).

34. Mellwaine, *Minutes*, 135. Other Martin's Hundred residents corroborated his testimony.

35. John Creed's January 20, 1633/34 will, presented for probate on April 18, 1635, British Public Records Office, Principal Probate Registry, Saddler 34, folio 5.

36. Nell M. Nugent, *Cavaliers and Pioneers: Abstracts of Virginia Land Patents and Grants* (Baltimore, 1969), I, 29-30, 33, 108, 114, 224.

37. A surgeon named Thomas Ward, who resided in Lower Norfolk County during the 1640s and 50s, seemingly had no connection with the Martin's Hundred potter.

38. The grave contained the remains of a large-boned adult Caucasian male, which Smithsonian Institution physical anthropologists determined showed evidence of a massive blow to the cranium. Noel Hume interpreted the head wound as trauma inflicted during the 1622 massacre. Ivor Noel Hume, *Martin's Hundred* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1982), 211–13.

39. Spectrographic analysis determines the presence/absence of elements which proportional differences give clays distinctive properties. Microscopic examination of the pottery produced at Martin's Hundred revealed semi-fossilized root casts, which are found in Tidewater Virginia clays (William E. Pittman, personal communication, September 5, 1995; Noel Hume, *Martin's Hundred*, 105–106, 186–87, 193, 198–99).

40. Noel Hume, *Martin's Hundred*, 194–96.

41. Personal communication, Beverly Straub and Robert Hunter, August, 1995.

42. Fragments of locally made coarse earthenware vessels found on the Governor's Land at the ca. 1630–1645 Pasbehay Tenement site may have been manufactured at Jamestown. Alan C. Outlaw, *Governor's Land: Archaeology of Early Seventeenth Century Virginia* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1990), 79, Appendix A.

43. Noel Hume, *Martin's Hundred*, 128. See also Leslie B. Grigsby, *English Slip-Decorated Earthenware at Williamsburg* (Williamsburg, 1993), 54, plate 66.















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